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THE OXONIAN

IN

THELEMARKEN;

OR,

NOTES OF TRAVEL IN SOUTH-WESTERN NORWAY

IN THE SUMMERS OF 1856 AND 1857.

WITH GLANCES AT THE LEGENDARY LORE
OF THAT DISTRICT.

BY

THE REV. FREDERICK METCALFE, M.A.,

FELLOW OF LINCOLN COLLEGE, OXFORD,
AUTHOR OF
"THE OXONIAN IN NORWAY."

32926

"Auf den Bergen ist Freiheit; der Hauch der Grüfte,
Steigt nicht hinauf in die schönen Lüfte,
Die Welt is volkommen überall.
Wo der Mensch nicht hinein kömmt mit seiner Qual."

"Tu nidum servas: ego laudo ruris amœni
Rivos, et musco circumlita saxa, nemusque."

IN TWO VOLUMES.
VOL. I.

LONDON:
HURST AND BLACKETT, PUBLISHERS,
SUCCESSORS TO HENRY COLBURN,
13, GREAT MARLBOROUGH STREET.
1858.

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32926

LONDON:
SAVILL AND EDWARDS, PRINTERS, CHANDOS STREET,
COVENT GARDEN

PREFACE.

In the neighbourhood of Bayeux, in Normandy, it is said that there still lingers a superstition which most probably came there originally in the same ship as Rollo the Walker. The country folks believe in the existence of a sprite (goubelin) who plagues mankind in various ways. His most favourite method of annoyance is to stand like a horse saddled and bridled by the roadside, inviting the passers-by to mount him. But woe to the unlucky wight who yields to the temptation, for off he sets—"Halloo! halloo! and hark away!" galloping fearfully over stock and stone, and not unfrequently ends by leaving his rider in a bog or horse-pond, at the same time vanishing with a loud peal of mocking laughter. "A heathenish and gross superstition!" exclaims friend Broadbrim. But what if we try to extract a jewel out of this

ugly monster; knock some commonsense out of his head. Goethe turned the old fancy of *Der getreue Eckart* to good account in that way. What if a moral of various application underlies this grotesque legend. Suppose, for the nonce, that the rider typify the writer of a book. Unable to resist a strong temptation to bestride the Pegasus of his imagination—whether prose or verse—he ventures to mount and go forth into the world, and not seldom he gets a fall for his pains amid a loud chorus of scoffs and jeers. Indeed, this is so common a catastrophe, from the days of Bellerophon downwards (everybody knows that he was the author of the *Letters** that go by his name), so prone is inkshed to lead to disaster, that the ancient wish, "Oh that mine adversary had written a book," in its usual acceptation (which entirely rests, be it said, on a faulty interpretation of the original language), was really exceedingly natural, as the fulfilment of it was as likely as not to lead to the fullest gratification of human malice.

In defiance, however, of the dangers that

* See Lempriere's *Classical Dictionary*.

threatened him, the writer of these lines did once gratify his whim, and mount the goblin steed, and as good luck would have it, without being spilled or dragged through a horse-pond, or any mischance whatsoever. In other words, instead of cold water being thrown upon his endeavours, *The Oxonian in Norway* met with so indulgent a handling from that amiable abstraction, the "Benevolus Lector," that it soon reached a second edition.

So far the author's lucky star was in the ascendant. But behold his infatuation, he must again mount and tempt his fate, "Ay! and on the same steed, too," cries Mr. Bowbells, to whom the swarming sound of life with an occasional whiff of the sewers is meat, and drink, and all things; who is bored to death if he sees more of the quiet country than Brighton or Ramsgate presents, and is about as locomotive in his tastes as a London sparrow.

"Norway again, forsooth—*nous revenons à nos moutons*—that horrid bleak country, where the cold in winter is so intense that when you sneeze, the shower from your olfactories rattles against the earth like dust-shot, and in summer you can't sleep

for the brazen-faced sun staring at you all the twenty-four hours. What rant that is about

> The dark tall pines that plume the craggy ledge,
> High over the blue gorge,

and all that sort of thing. Give me Kensington Gardens and Rotten Row!"

Still—in spite of Bowbells—we shall venture on the expedition, and probably with less chance of a fiasco than if we travelled by the express-train through the beaten paths of central Europe. There, all is a dead level. Civilization has smoothed the gradients actually and metaphorically—alike in the Brunellesque and social sense. As people progress in civilization, the more prominent marks of national character are planed off. Individuality is lost. The members of civilized society are as like one another as the counters on a draft-board. "They rub each other's angles down," and thus lose "the picturesque of man and man." The same type keeps repeating itself with sickening monotony, like the patterns of paper-hangings, instead of th se delightfully varied arabesques with which the free hand of the painter used to diversify the walls of the antique dwelling.

But it is not so with the population of a primitive country like Norway. Much of the simplicity that characterized our forefathers is still existing there. We are Aladdined to the England of three centuries ago. Do you mean to say that you, a sensible man or woman, prefer putting on company manners at every turn, being everlastingly swaddled in the artificial restraints of society; being always among grand people, or genteel people, or superior people, or people of awful respectability? Do you prefer an aviary full of highly educated song-birds mewed up so closely that they "show off" one against another, filled with petty rivalries and jealousies, to the gay, untutored melody of the woods poured forth for a bird's own gratification or that of its mate? Do you like to spend your time for ever in trim gardens, among standards and espaliers, and spruce flower-beds, so weeded, and raked, and drilled, and shaped, that you feel positively afraid of looking and walking about for fear of making a *faux pas*? Oh no! you would like to see a bit of wild rose or native heather. (Interpret this as you list of the flowers of the field, or a fairer flower still.)

You prefer climbing a real lichened rock *in situ*, that has not been placed there by Capability Brown or Sir Joseph Paxton.

Indeed, the avidity with which books of travel in primitive countries—whether in the tropics or under the pole—are now read, shows that the more refined a community is, the greater interest it will take in the occupation, the sentiments, the manners of people still in a primitive state of existence. Our very over-civilization begets in us a taste to beguile oneself of its tedium, its frivolities, its unreality, by mixing in thought, at least, with those who are nearer the state in which nature first made man.

"The manners of a rude people are always founded on fact," said Sir Walter Scott, "and therefore the feelings of a polished generation immediately sympathize with them." It is this kind of feeling that has a good deal to do with urging men, who have been educated in all the habits and comforts of improved society, to leave the groove, and carve out for themselves a rough path through dangers and privations in wilder countries.

"You will have none of this sort of thing," said Dr. Livingstone, in the Sheldonian theatre, while

addressing Young Oxford on the fine field for manly, and useful, and Christian enterprise that Africa opens out,—"You will have none of this sort of thing there," while he uneasily shook the heavy sleeve of his scarlet D.C.L. gown, which he had donned in deference to those who had conferred on him this mark of honour. Yes, less comforts, perhaps, but at the same time less red tape.

"Brown exercise" is better than the stewy, stuffy adipocere state of frame in which the man of "indoors mind" ultimately eventuates. Living on frugal fare, in the sharp, brisk air of the mountain, the lungs of mind and body expand healthfully, and the fire of humanity burns brighter, like the fire in the grate when fanned by a draught of fresh oxygen. Most countries, when we visit them for the first time, turn out "the dwarfs of presage." Not so Norway. It grows upon you every time you see it. You need not fear, gentle reader, of being taken over beaten ground. "The Oxonian" has never visited Thelemarken and Saetersdal before. So come along with me, in the absence of a better guide, if you wish to cultivate a nearer acquaintance with the roughly forged, "hardware" sort of

people of this district, content to forget for a while the eternal willow-pattern crockery of home. Thelemarken is the most primitive part of Norway; it is the real *Ultima Thule* of the ancients; the very name indicates this, and the Norwegian antiquaries quote our own King Alfred in support of this idea. It is true, that on nearer inspection, its physical geography will not be found to partake of the marvellous peculiarities assigned to Thule by the ancient Greek navigator, Pytheas, who asserts that it possessed neither earth, air, or sea, but a chaotic mixture of all three elements. But that may emphatically be said to be neither here nor there. Inaccessible the country certainly is, and it is this very inaccessibility which has kept out the schoolmaster; so that old times are not yet changed, nor old manners gone, nor the old language unlearned under the auspices of that orthoepic functionary. The fantastic pillars and arches of fairy folk-lore may still be descried in the deep secluded glens of Thelemarken, undefaced with stucco, not propped by unsightly modern buttress. The harp of popular minstrelsy —though it hangs mouldering and mildewed with

infrequency of use, its strings unbraced for want of cunning hands that can tune and strike them as the Scalds of Eld—may still now and then be heard sending forth its simple music. Sometimes this assumes the shape of a soothing lullaby to the sleeping babe, or an artless ballad of love-lorn swains, or an arch satire on rustic doings and foibles. Sometimes it swells into a symphony descriptive of the descent of Odin; or, in somewhat of less Pindaric, and more Dibdin strain, it recounts the deeds of the rollicking, death-despising Vikings; while, anon, its numbers rise and fall with mysterious cadence as it strives to give a local habitation and a name to the dimly seen forms and antic pranks of the hollow-backed Huldra crew.

The author thinks that no apology is needed for working in some of the legendary interludes which the natives repeated to him, so curious and interesting, most of which he believes never appeared before in an English dress, and several of them in no print whatever. Legends are an article much in request just now; neither can they be considered trifling when viewed in the light thrown upon the

origin of this branch of popular belief and pastime by the foremost men of their time, *e.g.*, Scott, and more especially Jacob Grimm. Frivolous, indeed! not half so frivolous as the hollow-hearted, false-fronted absurdities of the "great and small vulgar," is the hollow-backed elf, with the grand mythological background reaching into the twilight of the earth's history, nor so trifling the simple outspoken peasant, grave, yet cheery, who speaks as he thinks, and actually sometimes laughs a good guffaw, as the stuck-up ladies and gentlemen of a section of the artificial world, with their heartless glitter, crocodile tears, their solemn pretence, their sham raptures.

I must not omit to say that the admirable troll-drawing, which forms the frontispiece of the first volume, is one selected from a set of similar sketches by my friend, T. G. Jackson, Esq., of Wadham College, Oxford. It evinces such an intimate acquaintance with the looks of those small gentry that it is lucky for him that he did not live in the days when warlocks were done to death.

F. M.

LINCOLN COLLEGE, OXFORD,
May, 1858.

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THE

OXONIAN IN THELEMARKEN.

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A STRANGE attraction has Norway for one who has once become acquainted with it: with its weird rocks and mountains—its dark cavernous fjords—its transparent skies—its quaint gulf-stream warming apparatus—its "Borealis race"—its fabulous Maelstrom—its "Leviathan slumbering on the Norway foam"—its sagas, so graphically portraying the manners and thoughts of an ancient race—

its sturdy population, descendants of that northern hive which poured from the frozen loins of the north, and, as Montesquieu says, "left their native climes to destroy tyrants and slaves, and were, a thousand years ago, the upholders of European liberty."

"Very attractive, no doubt," interrupts Piscator. "In short, the country beats that loadstone island in the East hollow, which extracted the bolts out of the ships' bottoms; drawing the tin out of one's pockets, and oneself thither every summer without the possibility of resistance. But a truce to your dithyrambs on scenery, and sagas, and liberty. Talk about the salmon-fishing. I suppose you're coming to that last—the best at the end, like the postscript of a young lady's letter."

Well, then, the salmon-fishing. A man who has once enjoyed the thrill of *that* wont so easily forget it. Here, for instance, is the month of June approaching. Observe the antics of that "old Norwegian," the Rev. Christian Muscular, who has taken a College living, and become a sober family man. See how he snorts and tosses up his head, like an old hunter in a paddock as the chase sweeps

by. He keeps writing to his friends, inquiring what salmon rivers are to be let, and what time they start, and all that sort of thing, although he knows perfectly well he can't possibly go; not even if he might have the priest's water on the Namsen. But no wonder Mr. Muscular is growing uneasy. The air of Tadpole-in-the-Marsh becomes unhealthy at that season, and he feels quite suffocated in the house, and prostrated by repose; and as he reads Schiller's fresh 'Berglied,' he sighs for the mountain air and the music of the gurgling river.

But there are mamma and the pledges; so he must resign all hope of visiting his old haunts. Instead of going there himself, in body, he must do it in spirit—by reading, for instance, these pages about the country, pretty much in the same way as the Irish peasant children, who couldn't get a taste of the bacon, pointed their potatoes at it, and had a taste in imagination. Behold, then, Mr. Muscular, with all the family party, and the band-boxes and bonnet-boxes, and umbrellas and parasols numbered up to twenty; and last, not least, the dog "Ole" (he delights to call the live things about him by

Norsk names), bound for the little watering-place of Lobster-cum-Crab. Behold him at the "Great Babel junction," not far from his destination, trying to collect his scattered thoughts—which are far away—and to do the same by his luggage, two articles of which—Harold's rocking-horse and Sigfrid's pap-bottle—are lost already. Shall I tell you what Mr. Muscular is thinking of? Of "the Long," when he shut up shop without a single care; feeling satisfied that his rooms and properties would be in the same place when he came back, without being entrusted to servants who gave "swarries" above-stairs during his absence.

Leaving him, then, to dredge for the marine monstrosities which abound at Lobster-cum-Crab, or to catch congers and sea-perch at the sunken wreck in the Bay—we shall start with our one wooden box, and various other useful articles, for the land of the mountain and the flood—pick up its wild legends and wild flowers, scale its mountains, revel in the desolation of its snowfields, thread its sequestered valleys—catching fish and shooting fowl as occasion offers; though we give fair notice that on this

occasion we shall bestow less attention on the wild sports than on other matters.

On board the steamer that bore us away over a sea as smooth as a mirror, was a stout English lady, provided with a brown wig, and who used the dredging-box most unsparingly to stop up the gaps in her complexion.

"A wild country is Norway, isn't it?" inquired she, with a sentimental air; "you will, no doubt, have to take a Lazaroni with you to show you the way?" (? Cicerone).

"The scenery," continued she, "isn't equal, I suppose, to that of Hoban. Do you know, I was a great climber until I became subject to palpitations. You wouldn't think it, so robust as I am; but I'm very delicate. My two families have been too much for me."

I imagined she had been married twice, or had married a widower.

"You know," continued she, confidentially, "I had three children, and then I stopped for some years, and began again, and had two more. Children are such a plague. I went with them to the sea, and

would you believe it, every one of them took the measles."

But there was a little countrywoman of ours on board whose vivacity and freshness made up for the insipidity of the "Hoban lady." She can't bear to think that she is doing no good in the world, and spends much of her time in district visiting in one of the largest parishes of the metropolis. Not that she had a particle of the acid said to belong to some of the so-called sisters of mercy—reckless craft that, borne along by the gale of triumphant vanity, have in mere wantonness run down many an unsuspecting vessel—I mean trifled with honest fellows' affections, and then suddenly finding themselves beached, in a matrimonial sense, irretrievably pronounce all men, without exception, monsters. And, thus, she whose true mission it was to be "the Angel in the House," presiding, ministering, soothing, curdles up into a sour, uneasy devotee.

At sea, a wise traveller will be determined to gather amusement from trifles; nay, even rather than get put out by any delay or misadventure, set about performing the difficult task of constructing

a silk purse out of a sow's ear. For instance, our vessel, being overburdened, steered excessively ill, as might be seen from her wake, which, for the most part, assumed the shape of zigzags or arcs of circles. This disconcerted one grumpy fellow uncommonly. But we endeavoured to restore his good humour by telling him that we were not practising the "great" but the "little" circle sailing. His mantling sulkiness seemed to evaporate at this pleasantry; and, subsequently, when, on the coal lessening, and lightening our craft astern, she steered straighter, he facetiously apostrophized the man at the wheel—

"You're the man to take the kinks out of her course; we must have you at the wheel all night, and as much grog as you like, at my expense, afterwards."

The captain, who was taken prisoner on returning from the Davis' Straits fishery, during the French wars, and was detained seven years in France, gives me some information about the Arctic shark (Squalus Arcticus), which is now beginning to reappear on the coast of Norway.

"We used to call them the blind shark, sir—more by token they would rush in among the nets and seize our fish, paying no more attention to us than nothing at all. They used to bite pieces out of our fish just like a plate, and no mistake, as clean as a whistle, sir. I've often stuck my knife into 'em, but they did not wince in the least—they did not appear to have no feeling whatsomdever. I don't think they had any blood in 'em; I never saw any. I've put my hand in their body, and it was as cold as ice."

"By-the-bye, captain," said I, to our commander, who was a fubsy, little round red-faced man, with a cheery blue eye, "how's this? Why, you are in uniform!"

"To be sure I am. Th' Cumpany said it must be done. Those furriners think more of you with a bit of gowd lace on your cap and coat. An order came from our governor to wear this here coat and cap—so I put 'em on. What a guy I did look—just like a wolf in sheep's clothing."

"Or a daw in borrowed plumes," suggested I.

"But I put a bould face on't, and came a-board,

and walked about just as if I had the old brown coat on, and now I've got quite used to the change."

Now this little fellow is as clever as he is modest —every inch a seaman. I've seen him calm and collected in very difficult circumstances on this treacherous old North Sea.

Last year, in the autumn, the captain tells me he was approaching the Norwegian coast in the grey of the morning when he descried what he took to be a quantity of nets floating on the water, and several boats hovering about them. He eased the engine for fear of entangling the screw. Some Cockneys on board, who wore nautical dresses, and sported gilt buttons on which were engraved R. T. Y. C., laughed at the captain for his excessive carefulness. Presently it turned out that what had seemed to be floating nets were the furniture and hencoops of the ill-fated steamer *Norge*, which had just been run down by another steamer, and sunk with a loss of some half a hundred lives. A grave Norwegian on board now lectured the young men for their ignorance and bravado.

"They just did look queer, I'll a-warrant ye," continued our north-country captain. "They laughed on t'other side of their mouths, and were mum for the rest of the voyage."

"What vessel's that?" asked I.

"Oh! that's the opposition—the Kangaroo."

This was the captain's pronunciation of *Gangr Rolf* (Anglicè, Rollo, the Walker), the Norwegian screw, which I hear rolls terribly in a sea-way.

"Hurrah!" I exclaimed. "Saall for Gamle Norge," as we sighted the loom of the land. How different it is from the English coast. The eye will in vain look for the white perpendicular cliffs, such as hedge so much of old Albion, their glistening fronts relieved at intervals by streaks of darker hue, where the retreating angle of the wall-like rock does not catch the sun's rays; while behind lie the downs rising gently inland, with their waving fields of corn or old pastures dotted with sheep. Quite as vainly will you cast about for the low shores of other parts of our island—diversified, it may be, by yellow dunes, with the sprinkling of shaggy flag-like grass, or, elsewhere, the flat fields termi-

nating imperceptibly in flatter sands, the fattening ground of oysters.

As far as I can judge at this distance, instead of the coast forming one sober businesslike line of demarcation, with no nonsense about it, showing exactly the limits of land and ocean, as in other countries, here it is quite impossible to say where water ends and land begins. It is neither fish nor fowl. Those low, bare gneiss-rocks, for instance, tumbled, as it were, into a lot of billows. One would almost think they had got a footing among the waves by putting on the shape and aspect of water. Well, if you scan them accurately you find they are unmistakeably bits of islands. But as we approach nearer, look further inland to those low hills covered with pine-trees, which somehow or other have managed to wax and pick up a livelihood in the clefts and crannies of the rocks, or sometimes even on the bare scarps. While ever and anon a bald-topped rock protruding from the dark green masses stands like a solitary Friar of Orders Grey, with his well shaven tonsure, amid a crowd of black cowled Dominicans.

"Surely that," you'll say, "is the coast line proper?"

"Wrong again, sir. It is a case of wheels within wheels; or, to be plain, islands within islands. Behind those wooded heights there are all sorts of labyrinths of salt water, some ending in a *cul-de-sac*, others coming out, when you least expect it, into the open sea again, and forming an inland passage for many miles. If that myth about King Canute bidding the waves not come any further, had been told of this country, there would have been some sense in it, and he might have appeared to play the wave-compeller to some purpose. For really, in some places, it is only by a nice examination one can say how far the sea's rule does extend."

The whole of the coast is like this, except between the Naze and Stavanger, rising at times, as up the West Coast, into magnificent precipices, but still beaded with islands from the size of a pipe of port to that of an English county. Hence there are two ways of sailing along the coast, "indenskjærs," *i.e.*, within the "skerries," and "uden-

skjærs," or outside of the "skerries," *i.e.*, in the open sea. The inner route has been followed by coasters from the days of the Vikings. Those pilots on the Norwegian Government steam-vessels whom you see relieving each other alternately on the bridge, spitting thoughtfully a brown fluid into a wooden box, and gently moving their hand when we thread the watery Thermopylæ, are men bred up from boyhood on the coast, and know its intricacies by heart. The captain is, in fact, a mere cypher, as far as the navigation is concerned.

"You've never been in Norway before?" I inquired of the fair Samaritan.

"No; this is my first visit. I hope I shall like it."

"I can imagine you will. If you are a lover of fashion and formality, you will not be at ease in Norway. The good folks are simple-minded and sincere. If they invite you to an entertainment, it is because they are glad to see you. Not to fill up a place at the table, or because they are obliged to do the civil, at the same time hoping sincerely you wont come. Their forefathers were men of great

self-denial, and intensely fond of liberty. When it was not to be had at home, they did what those birds were doing that rested on our mast during the voyage, migrated to a more congenial clime—in their case to Iceland. The present Norwegians have a good deal of the same sturdy independence about them; some travellers say, to an unpleasant degree. It's true they are rather rough and uncouth; but, like their forefathers, when they came in contact with old Roman civilization in France and Nôrmandy, they will progress and improve by intercourse with the other peoples of Europe.

"Their old mythology is grand in the extreme. Look at that rainbow, yonder. In their eyes, the bow in the cloud was the bridge over which lay the road to Valhalla. Then their legends. Do you know, I think that much of our fairy lore came over to us from Norway, just as the seeds of the mountain-flowers in Scotland are thought by Forbes to have come over from Scandinavia on the ice-floes during the glacial period. If I had time, I could tell you a lot of sprite-stories; among others, one how the elves all left Jutland one night in an old wreck, lying on

the shore, and got safe to Norway. To this country, at all events, those lines wont yet apply:—

"The power, the beauty, and the majesty
That had her haunts in dale, or fairy fountain,
Or forest, by slow stream, or pebbly spring,
Or chasms, or watery depths; all these have vanished.
They live no longer in the faith of reason."

"But here we are in Christiansand harbour, and yonder is my steamer, the *Lindesnaes*, which will take me to Porsgrund, whither I am bound; so farewell, and I hope you will not repent of your visit to Norway!"

CHAPTER II.

Disappointed fishermen—A formidable diver—Arendal, the Norwegian Venice—A vocabulary at fault—Ship-building—The Norwegian Seaboard—Sandefjord, the Norwegian Brighton—A complicated costume—Flora's own bonnet—Bruin at large—Skien and its saw-mills—Norway cutting its sticks—Wooden walls—Christopher Hansen Blum—The Norwegian phase of religious dissent—A confession of faith—The Norsk Church the offspring of that of Great Britain.

Two Englishmen were on board the *Lindesnaes*, who had been fishing a week in the Torrisdal Elv, and had had two rises and caught nothing; so they are moving along the coast to try another river. But it is too late for this part of Norway. These are early rivers, and the fish have been too long up to afford sport with the fly.

The proverb, "never too old to learn," was practically brought to my mind in an old Norwegian gentleman on board.

"My son, sir, has served in the English navy.

I am seventy years old, and can speak some English. I will talk in that language and you in Norwegian, and so we shall both learn. You see, sir, we are now going into Arendal. This is a bad entrance when the wind is south-west, so we are clearing out that other passage there to the eastward. There is a diver at work there always. Oh, sir, he's frightful to behold! First, he has a great helmet, and lumps of lead on his shoulders, and lead on his thighs, and lead on his feet. All lead, sir! And then he has a dagger in his belt."

"A dagger!" said I; "what's that for?"

"Oh! to keep off the amphibia and sea-monsters; they swarm upon this coast."

As he spoke, the old gentleman contorted his countenance in such a manner that he, at all events, let alone the diver, was frightful to behold. Such was the effect of the mere thought of the amphibia and sea-monsters. Fortunately, his head was covered, or I can't answer for it that each particular hair would not have stood on end like to the quills of the fretful porcupine. It struck me that he must have been reading of Beowulf, the Anglo-

Saxon hero, and his friend Breca, and how they had naked swords in their hands to defend them against the sea-monsters, and how Beowulf served the creatures out near the bottom of the sea (sae-grunde néah).

At Arendal, where the vessel stops for some hours, I take a stroll with a Norwegian schoolboy. Abundance of sycamore and horse-chesnut, arrayed in foliage of the most vivid hue, grow in the pretty little ravines about this Norwegian Venice, as it is called.

"What is the name of that tree in Norsk," I asked of my companion, pointing to a sycamore.

"Ask, *i.e.* ash."

"And of that?" inquired I, pointing to a horse-chesnut.

"Ask," was again the reply.

Close to the church was the dead-house, where corpses are placed in winter, when the snow prevents the corpse being carried to the distant cemetery. In the little land-locked harbour I see a quantity of small skiffs, here called "pram," which are to be had new for the small price of three

dollars, or thirteen shillings and sixpence English. The vicinity of this place is the most famous in Norway for mineralogical specimens. Arendal has, I believe, the most tonnage and largest-sized vessels of any port in Norway. Ship-building is going forward very briskly all along the coast since the alteration in the English navigation laws. At Grimstead, which we passed, I observed eight vessels on the stocks: at Stavanger there are twenty.

The reader is perhaps not aware that, reckoning the fjords, there is a sea-board of no less than eight thousand English miles in Norway—*i.e.*, there is to every two and a half square miles of country a proportion of about one mile of sea-coast. This superfluity of brine will become more apparent by comparing the state of things in other countries. According to Humboldt, the proportion in Africa is one mile of sea-coast to one hundred and forty-two square miles of land. In Asia, one to one hundred. In North America, one to fifty-seven. In Europe, one to thirty-one.

With such an abundance of "water, water every-

where"—I mean salt, not fresh—one would hardly expect to meet with persons travelling from home for the sake of sea-bathing. And yet such is the case. On board is a lady going to the sea-baths of Sandefjord. She tells me there is quite a gathering of fashionables there at times. Last year, the wife of the Crown Prince, a Dutch woman by birth, was among the company. She spent most of her time, I understood, in sea-fishing. Besides salt-water baths, there are also baths of rotten seaweed, which are considered quite as efficacious for certain complaints as the mud-baths of Germany. Landing at Langesund, I start for Skien on board the little steamer *Traffic*.

A bonder of Thelemark is on board, whose costume, in point of ugliness, reminds one of the dress of some of the peasants of Bavaria. Its chief characteristics were its short waist and plethora of buttons. The jacket is of grey flannel, with curious gussets or folds behind. The Quaker collar and wristbands are braided with purple. Instead of the coat and waistcoat meeting the knee-breeches halfway, after the usual fashion, the latter have to

ascend nearly up to the arm-pits before an intimacy between these two articles of dress is effected. Worsted stockings of blue and white, worked into stars and stripes, are joined at the foot by low shoes, broad-toed, like those of Bavaria, while the other end of the man—I mean his head—is surmounted by a hat, something like an hour-glass in shape.

The fondness of these people for silver ornaments is manifest in the thickly-set buttons of the jacket, on which I see is stamped the intelligent physiognomy of that king of England whose equestrian statue adorns Pig-tail-place; his breeches and shoes also are each provided with a pair of buckles, likewise of silver.

Contrasting with this odd-looking monster is a Norwegian young lady, with neat modern costume, and pair of English gauntlet kid gloves. Her bouquet is somewhat peculiar; white lilies, mignionette, asparagus-flower, dahlias, and roses. Her carpet-bag is in a cover, like a white pillow-case.

Bears, I see by a newspaper on board, are ter-

ribly destructive this year in Norway. One Bruin has done more than his share. He has killed two cows, and wounded three more; not to mention sheep, which he appears to take by way of *hors d'œuvres*. Lastly, he has killed two horses; and the peasants about Vaasen, where all this happened, have offered eight dollars (thirty-six shillings) for his apprehension, dead or alive.

At the top of the fjord, fourteen English miles from the sea, lies Skien. The source of its prosperity and bustle are its saw-mills. Like Shakspeare's Justice, it is full of saws. The vast water-power caused by the descent of the contents of the Nord-Sö is here turned to good account: setting going a great number of wheels. Two hundred and fifty dozen logs are sawn into planks per week; and the vessels lie close by, with square holes in their bows for the admission of the said planks into their holds. All the population seems to be occupied in the timber trade. Saws creaking and fizzing, men dashing out in little shallops after timbers that have just descended the foss, others fastening them to the endless chain

which is to drag them up to the place of execution; while the wind flaunts saw-dust into your face, and the water is like the floor of a menagerie. That unfortunate salmon, which has just sprung into the air at the bottom of the foss, near the old Roman Catholic monastery, must be rather disgusted at the mouthful he got as he plunged into the stream again.

But we must return to the modern Skien. This timber-built city was nearly half burnt down not long ago; but as a matter of course the place is being rebuilt of the old material. Catch a Norwegian, if he can help it, building his house of stone. Stone-houses are so cold and comfortless, he says. Since the fire, cigar-smoking has been forbidden in the streets under a penalty of four orts, or three shillings and fourpence sterling, for each offence.

The great man of Skien appears to be one Christopher Hansen Blum.

"Whose rope-walk is that?"

"Christopher Hansen Blum's."

"And that great saw-mill?"

"Christopher Hansen Blum's"

"And those warehouses?"

"Christopher Hansen Blum's"

"And that fine lady?"

"Christopher Hansen Blum's wife."

"And the other fine lady, my fair travelling companion with the gauntlet kid gloves?"

"Christopher Hansen Blum's niece."

This modern Marquis of Carabas (*vide Puss in Boots*) is also, I understand, one of the chief promoters of the canal which is being quarried out of the solid rock between Skien and the Nord-Sö; the completion of which will admit of an uninterrupted steam traffic from this place to Hitterdal, at the northern end of that lake, and deep in the bowels of Thelemarken.

A great stir has been lately caused at Skien by the secession from the establishment of Gustav Adolph Lammers, the vicar of the place. The history of this gentleman is one of the many indications to be met with of this country having arrived at that period in the history of its civilization which the other countries of Europe have passed many years ago;—we mean the phase of the first

development of religious dissent and a spirit of insubordination to the established traditions of the Church as by law established. We are transported to the days of Whitfield and Wesley. Lammers, who appears to be a sincere person, in spite of the variety of tales in circulation about him, commenced by inculcating greater strictness of conduct. He next declined to baptize children. This brought him necessarily into conflict with the church authorities, and the upshot was that he has seceded from the Church; together with a number of the fair sex, with whom he is a great favourite. The most remarkable part of the matter, however, is that he will apply, it is said, for a Government pension, like other retiring clergy. Whether the Storthing, within whose province all such questions come, will listen to any such thing remains to be seen.*

A tract in my possession professes to be the Confession of Faith of this "New Apostolic Church." In the preamble they state that they wish to make proper use of God's Word and Sacraments. But as they don't see how they can do this in the State

* His application has been refused.

Church, in which the Word is not properly preached, nor the Sacraments duly administered, they have determined to leave it, and form a separate community, in conformity with the Norwegian Dissenter Law of July 16, 1845. The baptism of infants they consider opposed to Holy Writ. All that the Bible teaches is to bring young children to Christ, with prayer and laying on of hands, and to baptize them when they can believe that Jesus Christ is the son of God, and will promise to obey his Gospel. Hence the elders lay hands upon young children, and at the same time read Mark x., verses 13-17. At a later period, these children are baptized by immersion. The Holy Communion is taken once a month, each person helping himself to the elements; confession or absolution, previously, are not required.

The community are not bound to days and high-tides, but it is quite willing to accept the days of rest established by law, on which they meet and read the Scriptures.

Marriage is a civil contract, performed before a notarius publicus.

The dead are buried in silence, being borne to the grave by some of the brethren; after the grave is filled up a psalm is sung.

All the members of the community agree to submit, if necessary, to brotherly correction; and if this is of no avail, to expulsion. Temporary exclusion from the communion is the correction to be preferred. These rules were accepted by ten men and twenty-eight women, on the 4th July, 1856—giving each other their right hand, and promising, by God's help,

> In life and death to serve the Lord Jesus,
> To love each other with sincere affection,
> To submit themselves one to another.

We have given the following particulars, because the state of the Christian religion in Norway must for ever be deeply interesting to England, if on no other account, for this reason, that in this respect she is the spiritual offspring of Great Britain. Charlemagne tried to convert Scandinavia, but he failed to reach Norway. The Benedictine monk, Ansgar of Picardy, went to Sweden, but never penetrated hither; in fact, the Norsk Christian Church

is entirely a daughter of the English. The first missionaries came over with Hacon the Good, the foster son of our King Athelstan; and though this attempt failed, through the tenacity of the people for heathenesse, yet the second did not, when Olaf Trygveson brought over missionaries from the north of England—Norwegian in blood and speech—and christianized the whole coast, from Sweden to Trondjem, in the course of one year—996-997.*

* Since the above was written, we find that the plot is thickening. Archdeacon Brun, of Norderhoug, insists on all communicants being examined by him previously to being admitted to the rite; while, at Sarpsborg, there has been a meeting to discuss the sin of eating the blood of animals, and the possibility of holiness free from sin in this life.

CHAPTER III.

A poet in full uniform—The young lady in gauntlet gloves again—Church in a cave—Muscular Christianity in the sixteenth century—A miracle of light and melody—A romance of bigotry—How Lutheranism came in like a lion—The last of the Barons—Author makes him bite the dust—Brief burial service in use in South Western Norway—The Sörenskriver—Norwegian substitute for Doctors' Commons—Grave ale—A priestly Samson—Olaf's ship—A silent woman—Norwegian dialects—Artificial salmon breeding—A piscatorial prevision.

NEXT day, at five o'clock, A.M., I drove off to the head of the Nord-Sö, distant half-a-dozen miles off, and got on board the steamer, which was crowded with passengers. An old gentleman on board attracted my attention. His dress was just like that of a livery servant in a quiet family in England—blue coat, with stand-up collar, and two rows of gold lace round it. This I find is the uniform of a sören-skriver. Konrad Swach—for that was his name—is a poet of some repute in this country. His most popular effusion is on the national flag of Norway,

which was granted to them by the present King, Oscar—a theme, be it remarked, which would have secured popularity for a second-rate poem among these patriotic Northmen. To judge from the poet's nose, it struck me that some of his poetic inspirations is due to drink. The front part of the vessel is beset by Thelemarken bonders, male and female, in their grotesque dress.

The young lady in gauntlet gloves is also on board, whom I make bold to address, on the strength of our having journeyed together yesterday. As we steam along through the usual Norwegian scenery of pines and grey rocks, she points out to me the mouth of a curious cave.

"That is Saint Michael's Church, as it is called. The opening is about sixteen feet wide, and about as many high, and goes some eighty feet into the cliff. In the Catholic times, it was used as a church, and became a regular place of pilgrimage, and was regarded as a spot of peculiar sanctity. In the sixteenth century, as the story goes, when the reformed faith had been introduced into the country, the clergyman of the parish of Solum, in which St.

Michael's was situate, was one Mr. Tovel. Formerly a soldier, he was a man of strong will, zealous for the new religion, and a determined uprooter of 'the Babylonian remnants of popery,' as he phrased it. The church in the cave was now sadly come down in the world, and had been despoiled of all its valuables. But in the eyes of the bonders, who, with characteristic tenacity of character, adhered to the old faith, it had risen higher in proportion. Numerous pilgrims resorted to it, and miracles were said to be wrought at the spot. At night, it was said, soft singing might be heard, and a stream of light seen issuing from the orifice, which lies four hundred feet above the water.

"One autumn evening, the reverend Mr. Tovel was rowing by the place when the above light suddenly illumined the dark waters. The boatmen rested on their oars and crossed themselves. Tovel urged them to land, but in vain. Determined, however, on investigating the matter himself, he obtained the services of two men from a neighbouring village, who apparently had less superstitious scruples than his own attendants, and watched from

his abode, on the other side of the lake, for the re-appearance of the light. On the eve of St. Michael he looks out, and sure enough the light was visible. Off he sets, with his two men, taking with him his Bible and sword. The night was still, with a few stars shining overhead. Reaching the foot of the rock, the priest sprang ashore, and invited the boatmen to accompany him, but not a step would they go. The superstition bred in the bone was not so easily to be eradicated, even by the coin and persuasion of Herr Tovel.

"'Cowards! stay here, then,' exclaimed his reverence, as he started up the steep ascent alone. After a hard scramble, he stood a foot or two below the cavern, when just as his head came on a level with its mouth the light suddenly vanished. At this trying moment, Tovel bethought him of the great Reformer, how he fought with and overcame the Evil One. This gave him fresh courage, and he entered the cavern, singing lustily Luther's psalm—

"'En Berg saa fast er os vor Gud,
So godt et Skiold og Vaerge:
Fra alt vor Not Han frier os ud
Han kan og nun os bierge.'

"At the last words the light suddenly reappeared. An aged priest, dressed up in the full paraphernalia of the Romish church, issues from a hidden door in the interior of the cavè, and greets Tovel with the words—

"'Guds Fred,' (God's peace); 'why should I fear those who come in God's name?'

"'What!' exclaimed the astonished Tovel; 'is it true, then, that Rome's priests are still in the land?'

"'Yes; and you are come sword in hand to drive out a poor old priest whose only weapon is a staff.'

"As he spoke, the door of an inner recess rolled back, and Tovel beheld an altar illuminated with iron lamps, over which hung a picture of St. Michael, the saint often worshipped in caves and mountains.

"'It is your pestiferous doctrines against which I wage war, not against your person,' rejoined Tovel. 'Who are you, in God's name?'

"'I am Father Sylvestef, the last priest of this Church. When the new religion was forced upon

the land, I wandered forth, and am now returned once more, to die where I have lived. The good people of Gisholdt Gaard have secretly supported me.'

"Moved with this recital, the Lutheran priest asks —'And are you trying to seduce the people back to the old religion?'

"The aged man rejoins, with vehemence—

"'It were an easy task, did I wish to do so; but I do not. It is only at night that I say prayers and celebrate mass in the inner sacristy there.'

"Tovel, thoroughly softened, when he finds that his beloved Reformed faith was not likely to suffer, finishes the conversation by saying—

"'Old man, you shall not lack anything that it is in my power to give you. Send to me for aught that you may have need of.'

"The venerable priest points to the stars, and exclaims, solemnly—

"'That God, yonder, will receive both of us, Protestant and Catholic.'

"After this they cordially shook hands. Tovel went home an altered man. Some time afterwards,

the light ceased to shine entirely. He knew why. Old Father Sylvester was no more.

"Mr. Tovel got off much better than many clergymen of the Reformed faith in those days. Old Peder Clausen, the chronicler, relates that he knew a man whose father had knocked three clergymen on the head. The stern old Norwegian bonders could ill brook the violence with which the Danes introduced Lutheranism; a violence not much short of that used by King Olaf in rooting out heathenism, and which cost him his life."

I thanked the young lady for her interesting information.

Presently a curious figure comes out of the cabin. It was a fine-looking old man, with white hair, and hooked nose, and keen eyes, shadowed by shaggy eyebrows. His dress consisted of a blue superfine frock-coat, with much faded gold embroidery on a stand-up collar; dark breeches, and Hessian boots. On his breast shone the Grand Cross of the North Star. A decided case of Commissioner Pordage, of the island of Silver-Store, with his "Diplomatic coat."

That's old Baron W——, the last remhant of the Norsk nobility. He wears the dress of an Amtman, which office he formerly held, and loses no opportunity of displaying it and the star. He it was who in 1821 protested against the phævelse (abolition) of the nobility. The Baron was evidently quite aware of the intense impression he was making upon the Thelemarken bonders. On our both landing, subsequently, at a station called Ulefoss, I was highly diverted at seeing him take off his coat and star and deposit the same in a travelling-bag, from which he drew forth a less pretending frock, first taking care to fold up the diplomatic coat with all the precision displayed by that little man of Cruikshank's in wrapping up Peter Schlemil's shadow. We both of us are bound, I find, for the steamer on the Bandagsvand.

"Well, what are we waiting for?" said I, to the man who had brought my horse and carriole.

"Oh, we must not start before the Baron. People always make way for him. He wont like us to start first."

"Jump up," said I, putting my nag in motion,

and leaving the Baron in the lurch, who was magniloquizing to the people around. All the bonders "wo-ho'd" my horse, in perfect astonishment at my presumption, while the Baron, with a fierce gleam of his eye, whipped his horse into motion. I soon found the advantage of being first, as the road was dreadfully dusty; and being narrow, I managed to keep the Baron last, and swallowing my dust for a considerable distance.

We were soon at Naes, on the Bandagsvand, where lay the little steamer which was to hurry us forty-two miles further into Thelemarken, to a spot called Dal. The hither end of the lake, which is properly called Hvide-sö (white-sea), is separated from the upper, or Bandagsvand, by a very narrow defile jammed in between tremendous precipices. We pass the church of Laurvig on the right, which is said to be old and interesting. The clergyman, Mr. H——, is on board. He tells me that the odd custom of spooning dust into a small hole (see *Oxonian in Norway*) is not usual in this part of Norway. The term used for it is "jords-paakastelse." The burial-service is very brief; being

confined to the words, "Af Jord er du, Til Jord skal du blive, ud af Jord skal du opstaae."

For his fee he receives from one ort = tenpence, to sixteen dollars, according to circumstances. In the latter case there would be a long funeral oration. Close by the church is the farm of Tvisæt (twice-sown), so called, it is said, because it often produced two crops a year. Although placed in the midst of savage and desolate scenery, the spot is so sheltered that it will grow figs in the open air.

The Sörenskriver is also on board, the next Government officer to the Amtman, or governor of the province. He is going to a "Skifte," as it is called. This word is the technical expression for dividing the property of a deceased person among his heirs, and is as old as Harald Hârfager, the same expression being used in Snorro's Chronicle of his division of his kingdom among his sons. In this simple country there is no necessity for Doctors' Commons. The relatives meet, and if there is no will the property is divided, according to law, among the legal heirs: if there

is one, its provisions are carried out: the Sörenskriver, by his presence, sanctioning the legality of the proceeding.

He informs me that there is generally a kind of lyke-wake on the melancholy occasion, where the "grave öl" and "arve öl," "grave ale," or "heir-ship ale," is swallowed in considerable quantities. In a recent Skifte, at which he presided, the executors charged, among the expenses to come out of the estate, one tonder malt and sixty-five pots of brantviin; while for the burial fee to the priest, the modest sum of one ort was charged. While the Sörenskriver was overhauling these items with critical eye, the peasant executor, who thought the official was about to take exception to the last item, or perhaps, which is more likely, wishing to divert his attention from the unconscionable charge for drink, observed that he really could not get the funeral service performed for less. The pastoral office would seem, from this, not to occupy a very high position among these clod-hoppers. Sixty-five pots, or pints, of brandy, a huge barrel of malt liquor, and ten-pennyworth of parson.

Mr. C., who is acquainted with Mr. Gieldrup, the priestly Samson of Aal, in Hallingdal, gives me some account of his taking the shine out of Rotner Knut, the cock and bully of the valley. It was on the occasion of Knut being married, and the parson was invited to the entertainment, together with his family. During the banquet, Rotner, evidently with the intention of annoying the priest, amused himself by pulling the legs of his son. Offended at the insult, Gieldrup seized the peasant, and hurled him with such force against the wooden door of the room, that he smashed through it. After which the parson resumed his place at the board, while Knut put his tail between his legs, as much abashed as Gunther, in the Nibelungenlied, when, at his wedding, he was tied up to a peg in the wall by his bride, the warrior virgin Brunhild.

It is customary in Hallingdal, where this occurred, to accompany the Hallingdance with the voice. One of the favourite staves in the valley had been—

Rotner Knut, Rotner Knut,
He is the boy to pitch the folks out.

It was now altered, and ran as follows, greatly to Knut's chagrin,—

Rotner Knut, Rotner Knut,
The priest is the man to pitch him out.

On another occasion, Gieldrup was marrying two or three couples, when one of the bridegrooms, impatient to be off, vaulted over the chancel rails, and asked what was to pay. In the twinkling of an eye the muscular parson caught him by the shoulders and hurled him right over the heads of the bystanders, who stood round the rails.

As we steam along, the Sörenskriver points out to me, on the top of the lofty rocks on the left, a rude representation in stone of a ship, which goes by the name of "Olaf's skib." Among other idiosyncrasies of the saint and martyr, one was, that of occasionally sailing over land. How his vessel came to be stranded here, I cannot learn. Further on, to the right, you see two figures in

stone, one of which appears to have lost its head, not metaphorically, but in the real guillotine sense.

The bonders will give you a very circumstantial account, part of which will not bear repetition here, how that this is a Jotul, who had some domestic unpleasantness with his lady, and treated her at once like the Defender of the Faith did Anne Boleyn (we beg pardon of Mr. Froude) casting her head across the water, where it is still lying, under the pine trees yonder, only that the steamer cannot stop to let us see it. The lady and gentleman were petrified in consequence.

> And lo! where stood a hag before,
> Now stands a ghastly stone, &c.

"I see you speak Norsk," said the Sörenskriver, "but you will find it of very little use yonder, at Dal. The dialect of Thelemarken, generally, is strange, but at Dal it is almost incomprehensible, even to us Norwegians. It is generally believed that the language here still possesses a good deal

of the tone and turn of the old Icelandic, which was once spoken all the country through."

I did not, however, find it so difficult. The Norwegians look upon English, I may here remark, as hard to pronounce. On that notable occasion, say they, when the Devil boiled the languages together, English was the scum that came to the top. A criticism more rude than even that of Charles V.

As we approach the landing-place, to my astonishment, I perceive a gentleman fly-fishing at the outlet of the stream into the lake.

He turned out to be Mr. H——, who is traversing the country, at the expense of the Government, to teach the people the method of increasing, by artificial means, the breed of salmon and other fish. He tells me, that last year he caught, one morning here, thirty-five trout, weighing from one to six pounds each.

His operations in the artificial breeding-line have been most successful; not only with salmon, but with various kinds of fish. He tells me it is a mistake to suppose that the roe will only be

productive if put in water directly. He has preserved it for a long period, transporting it great distances without its becoming addle, and gives me a tract which he has published on the subject. As we are just now at home in England talking of stocking the Antipodal rivers with salmon, this topic is of no little interest. The method of transporting the roe in Norway is in a wooden box, provided with shelves, one above another, and two or three inches apart, and drilled with small holes. Upon these is laid a thin layer of clean, moist, white, or moor, moss (not sand), and upon that the roe, which has already been milted. This is moistened every day. If the cold is very great, the box is placed within another, and chaff placed in the interstices between the two boxes. In this way roe has been conveyed from Leirdalsören to Christiania, a week's journey. Professor Rasch, who first employed moss in the transport, has also discovered that it is the best material for laying on the bottom of the breeding stews, the stalks placed streamwise. Moss is best for two reasons: first, it counteracts the tendency of the

water to freeze; and secondly, it catches the particles of dirt which float down the stream, and have an affinity rather for it than for the roe. The roe is best placed touching the surface of the stream, but it fructifies very well even when placed half, or even more, out of the water. Care is taken to remove from the stews such eggs as become mouldy, this being an indication that they are addle. If this is not done, the mouldiness soon spreads to the other good roe, and renders it bad. With regard to the nursery-ground itself, it is of course necessary to select a spring for this purpose which will not freeze in winter, and further, to protect the water from the cold by a roofing or house of wood.

I suppose the next thing we shall hear of will be, that roe that has been packed up for years will, by electricity or some sort of hocus-pocus, be turned to good account, just as the ears of corn in the Pyramids have been metamorphosed into standing crops. Mr. H——'s avocation, by-the-bye, reminds me of an old Norwegian legend about "The Fishless Lake" in Valders. Formerly

it abounded with fish; but one night the proprietor set a quantity of nets, all of which had disappeared by the next morning. Well, the Norwegian, in his strait, had recourse to his Reverence, who anathematized the net-stealer. Nothing more came of it till the next spring; when, upon the ice breaking, all the nets rose to the surface, full of dead fish. Since then no fish has been found in the lake. Mr. H—— might probably succeed in dissolving the charm.

"I see you are a fisherman," said Mr. H——; "you'll find the parson at Mö, in Butnedal, a few miles off, an 'ivrig fisker' (passionate fisherman)—ay! and his lady, too. They'll be delighted to see you. They have no neighbours, hardly, but peasants, and your visit will confer a greater favour on them than their hospitality on you. That is a very curious valley, sir. There are several 'tomter' (sites) of farmhouses, now deserted, where there once were plenty of people: that is one of the vestiges of the Black Death."

On second thoughts, however, he informed me

that it was just possible that Parson S—— might be away; as at this period of the summer, when all the peasants are up with their cattle at the Sæters, the clergy, having nothing whatever to do, take their holiday.

CHAPTER IV.

Mine host at Dal—Bernadotte's prudent benignity—Taxing the bill of costs—Hurrah for the mountains—Whetstones—Antique wooden church—A wild country—"Raven depth"—How the English like to do fine scenery—Ancient wood-carving—A Norwegian peasant's witticism—A rural rectory—Share and chair alike—Ivory knife-handles—Historical pictures—An old Runic calendar—The heathen leaven still exists in Norway—Washing day—Old names of the Norsk months—Peasant songs—Rustic reserve—A Norsk ballad.

MINE host at Dal, a venerable-looking personage, with long grey hair floating on his shoulders, was a member of the Extraordinary Meeting of Deputies at Eidsvold in 1815, when the Norwegians accepted the Junction with Sweden. I and the old gentleman exchanged cards. The superscription on his was—Gaardbruger Norgaard, Deputeret fra Norges Storthing—*i. e.*, Farmer Norgaard, A Deputy from Norway's Storthing.

Another reminiscence of his early days is a

framed and glazed copy of the Grundlov (Fundamental Law) of Norway, its palladium of national liberty, which a hundred and twelve Deputies drew up in six weeks, in 1814. Never was Constitution so hastily drawn up, and so generally practical and sensible as this.

The Crown Prince, the crafty Bernadotte, with his invading army of Swedes, had Norway quite at his mercy on that occasion; but the idea seems to have struck him suddenly that it was as well not to deal too hardly with her, as in case of his not being able to hold his own in Sweden, he might have a worse place of refuge than among the sturdy Norwegians. "I am resolved what to do, so that when I am put out of the stewardship they may receive me into their houses." So he assented to Norway's independence.

For my part, at this moment, I thought more about coffee than Norwegian liberty and politics; but as it was nine o'clock, P.M., the good people were quite put out by the request. Coffee in the forenoon, say they, tea in the evening. As it was, they made me pay pretty smartly for the accom-

modation next morning. "What's to pay?' said I, striding into the room, where sat the old Deputy's daughter, the mistress of the house, at the morning meal. She had not long ago become a widow, and had taken as her second husband, a few days before, a grisly-looking giant, who sat by in his shirt-sleeves.

"Ask *him*," said the fair Quickly, thinking it necessary, perhaps, just so recently after taking the vow of obedience, by this little piece of deference to her new lord to express her sense of submission to his authority. For my part, as an old traveller, I should rather say she did it for another feeling. English pigeons did not fly that way every day, and so they must be plucked; and the person to do it, she thought, was the Berserker, her awful-looking spouse. The charge was exorbitant; and as the good folks were regaling themselves with fresh mutton-chops and strawberries and cream, while they had fobbed us off with eggs and black bread and cheese—the latter so sharp that it went like a dagger to my very vitals at the first taste—I resolutely taxed

the bill of costs, and carried my point; whereupon we took leave of the Deputy and his descendants.

In one sense we had come to the world's end; for there is no road for wheels beyond this. The footpath up the steep cliff that looks down upon the lake is only accessible to the nimble horses of the country. "Hurrah!" exclaimed I, as I looked down on the blue lake, lying hundreds of feet perpendicularly below us. "Hurrah for the mountains! Adieu to the 'boppery bop' of civilization, with all its forms and ceremonies, and turnpikes and twaddle. Here you can eat, and drink, and dress as and when you like, and that is just the fun of the thing, more than half the relaxation of the trip." Why, this passion for mountain-travelling over the hills and far away is not peculiar to Englishmen. Don't the ladies of Teheran, even, after their listless "*vie à la pantoufle*," delight to hear of the approach of the plague, as they know they are sure to get off to the hills, and have a little tent-life in consequence? Didn't that fat boy Buttons (not in Pickwick, but

Horace), cloyed with the Priest's luscious cheese-cakes, long for a bit of coarse black bread, and run away from his master to get it?

The precipitous path is studded at intervals with heaps of hones, or whet-stones. I find that about here is the chief manufacture in all Norway for this article. One year, a third of a million were turned out. The next quarry in importance is at Kinservik, on the Hardanger Fjord. Surmounting the ascent, we traverse swampy ground dotted with birch-trees, and presently debouch upon one of those quaint edifices not to be found out of this country—stabskirke (stave church), as it is called—of which Borgund and Hitterdal Churches are well-known specimens. It is so called from the lozenge-shaped shingles (staves), overlapping each other like fish-scales, which case the roof and every part of the outside. Smaller and less pretending than those edifices, this secluded place of worship was of the same age—about nine hundred years. The resinous pine has done its work well, and the carving on the capitals of the wooden pillars at the doorway

is in good preservation, though parts have lately been churchwardenized.

"That is Eidsborg church," said a young student, who had voluntered to accompany me, as he was bound to a lone parsonage up the country, in this direction. "This is the church the young lady on board the steamer told you was so remarkable."

After making a rough sketch of the exterior, we proceeded on our journey. The few huts around were tenantless, the inhabitants all gone up to the châlets. The blanching bear-skulls on the door of one of these showed the wildness of the country we are traversing; while a black-throated diver, which was busy ducking after the fish in the sedge-margined pool close by, almost tempted me to load, and have a long shot at him. As we proceed, I observe fieldfares, ring-ouzel, and chaffinches, while many English wild flowers enliven the scene, and delicious strawberries assuage our thirst. Pursuing our path through the forest, we come to a post on which is written "Ravne jüv," Anglice, Raven depth.

"Det maa De see," (you must see that,) said

my companion, turning off up a narrow path, and frightening a squirrel and a capercailzie, which were apparently having a confab about things in general. I followed him through the pine-wood, getting over the swampy ground by the aid of some fallen trunks, and, in two or three minutes, came to the "Ravne jüv." It is made by the Sandok Elv, which here pierces through the mountains, and may be seen fighting its way thousands of feet below us. Where I stood, the cliff was perpendicular, or rather sloped inwards; and, by a singular freak of nature, a regular embrasured battlement had been projected forward, so as to permit of our approaching the giddy verge with perfect impunity.

Es schwebt eine *Brustwehre* über den Rand
Der furchtbaren Tiefe gebogen
Sie ward nicht erbauet von Menschen-hand
Es hätte sich's Keiner verwogen.

Lying flat, I put my head through an embrasure, and looked down into the Raven's depth.

"Ah! it's deeper than you think," said my companion. "Watch this piece of wood."

I counted forty before it reached a landing-place, and that was not above half the way.

Annoyed at our intrusion, two buff-coloured hawks and a large falcon kept flying backwards and forwards within shot, having evidently chosen this frightful precipice as the safest place they could find for their young. Luckily for them, the horse and guide had gone on with my fowling-piece, or they might have descended double-quick into the sable depths below, and become a repast for the ravens; who, as in duty bound, of course frequent the recesses of their namesake, although none were now visible.

What a pity a bit of scenery like this cannot be transported to England. The Norwegians look upon rocks as a perfect nuisance, while we sigh for them. Fancy the Ravne jüv in Derbyshire. Why, we should have Marcus' excursion-trains every week in the summer, and motley crowds of tourists thronging to have a peep into the dark profound, and some throwing themselves from the top of it, as they used to do from the Monument, and John Stubbs incising his name

on the battlements, cutting boldly as the Roman king did at the behests of that humbugging augur; and another true Briton breaking off bits of the parapet, just like those immortal excursionists who rent the Blarney Stone in two. Then there would be a grand hotel close by, and greasy waiters with white chokers, and the nape of their neck shaven as smooth as a vulture's head (faugh!) and their front and back hair parted in one continuous straight line, just like the wool of my lady's poodle. How strongly they would recommend to your notice some most trustworthy guide, to show you what you can't help seeing if you follow your nose, and are not blind—the said trustworthy guide paying him a percentage on all grist thus sent to his mill. Eventually, there would be a high wall erected, and a locked gate, as at the Turk Fall at Killarney, and a shilling to pay for seeing "private property," &c. &c. No, no! let well alone. Give me the "Raven deep" when it is in the silent solitudes of a Norwegian forest, and let me muse wonderingly, and filled with awe, at the stupendous engineering

of Nature, and derive such edification as I may from the sight.

At Sandok we get a fresh horse from the worthy Oiesteen, and some capital beer, which he brings in a wooden quaigh, containing about half a gallon.

On the face of the "loft," loft or out-house, I see an excellent specimen of wood carving. "That," said Oiesteen, "has often been pictured by the town people." All the farm-houses in this part of the country used to be carved in this fashion. One has only to read the Sagas to know why all these old houses no longer exist. It is not that the wood has perished in the natural way; experience, in fact, seems to show that the Norwegian pine is almost as lasting, in ordinary circumstances, as stone, growing harder by age. The truth is, in those fighting days of the Vikings, when one party was at feud with another, he would often march all night when his enemy least expected him, and surrounding the house where he lay, so as to let none escape, set it on fire.

The lad who took charge of the horse next stage was called Björn (Bear), a not uncommon

name all over Norway. It was now evening, and chilly.

"Are you cold, Björn?" said the student.

"No; the Björn is never chilly," was the facetious reply. The nearest approach to a witticism I had ever heard escape the mouth of a Norwegian peasant.

Two or three miles to the right we descry the river descending by a huge cataract from its birth-place among the rocky mountains of Upper Thelemarken. Presently we join what professes to be the high road from Christiania, which is carried some twenty miles further westward, and then suddenly ceases.

Long after midnight, we arrived at the Rectory House at ——, where I was to sleep. Mr. —— was an intelligent sort of person, very quiet and affable, and dressed in homespun from head to foot. After breakfast, the staple of which was trout from the large lake close by, I offered him a weed, which he declined, with the remark, "Ieg tygge," I chew. The ladies, as usual, are kind and unassuming, with none of the female arts to be found in cities. A friend of mine, proud of his fancied skill in

talking Norsk, was once stopping at a clergyman's in Norway, when he apologised to the ladies for his deficiencies in their language. He was evidently fishing for compliments, and was considerably taken aback when one of them, in the most unsophisticated manner, observed, taking him quite at his word, "Oh yes, strangers, you know, often confound the words, and say one for another, which makes it very difficult to comprehend them."

Ludicrous mistakes are sometimes made by the Norwegians also. An English gentleman arrived at a change-house in Österdal late one evening, and was lucky in obtaining the only spare bed. Presently, when he was on the point of retiring to rest, a Norwegian lady also arrived, intending to spend the night there. What was to be done. Like a gallant Englishman as he was, with that true, unselfish courtesy which is not, as in France, confined to mere speeches, he immediately offered to give up his bed to the "unprotected female," who was mistress of a little English. "Many thanks; but what will you do, sir?" "Oh! I will

take a chair for the night." At this answer the lady blushed, and darted out of the room, and in a few minutes her carriole was driving off in the darkness. What could be the meaning of it? The peasant's wife soon after looked into the room, with a knowing sort of look at the Englishman. He subsequently discovered the key to the enigma. The lady thought he said "he would take a *share*," and was, of course, mightily offended. So much for a smattering of a foreign language. Doubtless, from that day forward, she would quote this incident to her female friends as an instance of the natural depravity of Englishmen; and this scapegrace would be looked upon as a type of his nation.

The priest has some knives, the handles of which are of ivory, and exquisitely carved in a flowing pattern. They cost as much as three dollars apiece, a great sum. But the artificer, who lives near, is the best in Thelemarken, the part of Norway most celebrated for this art. The patterns used are, I hear, of very ancient date; being, in some instances, identical with those on

various metal articles discovered from time to time in the barrows and cromlechs.

The walls of the sitting-room are hung with some engravings on national subjects, *e.g.*, "Anna Kolbjörnsdatter og de Svenske," "Olaf, killed at Sticklestad," and "Konrad Adeler, at Tenedos." Kort Adeler, whose name lives in a popular song by Ingemann, was born at Brevik, in 1622, but took service under the Venetians, and on one occasion fought and slew Ibrahim, the Turkish admiral. Ibrahim's sword and banner are still to be seen at Copenhagen. Adeler's successor, as Norwegian Admiral, was the renowned Niels Juel, the Nelson of the North.

I saw tossing about the Manse an old Runic Calendar, which nobody seemed to care anything about. It was found in the house when the parson came there, and appeared occasionally to have been used for stirring the fire, as one end was quite charred. Without much difficulty I succeeded in rescuing it from impending destruction, and possess it at this moment. Some of these calendars are shaped like a circle, others like an

ellipse. They were of two kinds. Messedag's stav (mass-day stave) and Primstav. But the latter term properly applies to a much more complex sort of calendar than the other. It contained not only runes for festivals and other days, but also the Sunday letter or quarters of the moon for every golden number. Its name is derived from prima luna, *i.e.*, the first full moon after the vernal equinox. The primstav proper was generally four feet long. The almanack I here obtained is flat, and figured on two sides, not as some of the old Anglo-Saxon calendars were, square, and figured on four sides. It is shaped like a flat sword, an inch and a half broad and half an inch thick, and is provided with a handle. The owner of it appears to have been born on the 6th June, as his monogram which is on the handle occurs again on that day. On the broad sides the days of the week are notched, and on the narrow sides there is a notch for every seventh day; *i.e.*, the narrow sides mark the weeks, the broad sides the days.

The day-marks or signs do not go from January to July, and from July to December. On the one

side, which was called the Vetr-leid, winter side, they begin with the 14th of October, or "winter night," and reach to the 13th of April. On the other side, which was called the summer side, they begin with the 14th of April "summer night," and go to the 13th of October. The runes, or marks distinguishing the days, are derived from a variety of circumstances: sometimes from the weather, or farming operations, or from legends of saints. But it must be observed that hardly two calendars can be found corresponding to each other. Some are simpler, others more complex. In some, one saint's day is distinguished, in others another. Winter then began with the old Norwegians on the 14th of October; Midwinter was ninety days after—*i.e.*, on the 11th January, and Midsummer ninety-four days from the 14th of April.

The great winter festival in honour of Thor, on 20th January, was called Höggenät. *i.e.*—slaughter-night.* This word is derived from högge (to cut

* Their days always began with the sunset of the day before. Our fortnight and se'night are lingering reminiscences of this old Norsk method of calculation by nights instead of days.

or hew), on account of the number of animals slaughtered in honour of Thor. The word still survives in Scotland, in Hogmanáy (the last night of the old year).

Snorro Sturlesen informs us that it was Hacon the Good, foster-son of our King Athelstan, who made a law that the great Asa, or heathen festival, which used to be held for three successive days in January, should be transferred to the end of December, and kept so many days as it was usual to keep Christmas in the English Church. His missionaries being Northmen who had resided in England, like St. Augustine, the Apostle of England, accommodated themselves to the superstitions and habits in vogue among the people they came to convert. The great banquets, where people feasted on the flesh of horses and other victims, were turned into eating and drinking bouts of a more godly sort; and the Skaal to Odin assumed the shape of a brimming bowl to the honour of the Redeemer, the Virgin, and the saints. In their cups, no doubt, their ideas would become

at times confused, and many a baptized heathen would hiccup a health to Odin and Thor. Even now, as we have seen, after the lapse of so many centuries, much of the old heathen leaven infects their Christianity.

We may here observe that the Norwegian word for Saturday is Löverdag, *i.e.*, washing-day, as a preparation for the Sunday festival, so that the division of time into weeks of seven days must have originated in Norway within the period of its conversion to Christianity. Herein, then, they differed from the Anglo-Saxons, who called it Sæterndæg (Saturnsday); while the South Germans called it after the Jewish Sabbath, Sambaztag, now Samstag. The Scandinavians had exhausted their great gods upon the other days. Sun and Moon, Tyr, Odin, Thor, and Freya, had been used up, so they took the appropriate name Löverdag, above-mentioned.

The following are the old names of the Norsk months

Gormánaðr	from	Oct. 21	to	Nov. 19.
Ýlir	„	Nov. 20	„	Dec. 19.
Mörsúgr	„	Dec. 20	„	Jan. 18.

Þorri	from	Jan. 19	to	Feb. 17.
Goe, or Gœ	,,	Feb. 18	,,	March 19.
Ein mánaðr	,,	March 20	,,	April 18.
Gauk	,,	April 19	,,	May 18.
Skerpla	,,	May 19	,,	June 17.
Sólmánaðr	,,	June 18	,,	July 22.
Heyannir	,,	July 23	,,	Aug. 21.
Tvimánaðr	,,	Aug. 22	,,	Sep. 20.
Haustmánaðr	,,	Sep. 21	,,	Oct. 20

Some of these names are very appropriate, *e.g.*, Gormánaðr is gore-month, when so many victims were slaughtered. Ýlir, or Jýlir, is the month that prepares for Yule. Mörsúgr refers to the good cheer which people sucked up at that period. Þorri is said to come from Þverra, to get short, because the good things are then nearly run out. Gaukmánaðr is Gauk's (cuckoo's) month. Sólmánaðr is the sun's month. Heyannir is hay-time. Tvimánaðr (from tvi, two) is the second month after midsummer, while Haustmánaðr is harvest (scotticè) "har'st" month.

But our readers will think us becoming prosy, so we will mount the cart, and discarding the society of the fat peasant woman who proposes inflicting herself upon us, accept the kind offer of our intelligent student to accompany us on our

journey to Kos-thveit (Kos-thwaite, as we should say in East Anglia), on the Lake of Totak.

"Are there any songs current in the mouths of the peasants here?" I inquired, as we drove very slowly along a narrow road, through morasses, studded with birch. "This is pre-eminently the old fashioned part of Norway, so I suppose if they are anywhere they are here."

"Oh, yes. There has been a student from Christiania wandering about these parts lately, collecting songs for the purpose of publication. Many of them are dying out fast. Some years ago, the girls used to improvise over the loom. At weddings, lad and lass used to stevne (sing staves) in amœbean fashion, on the spur of the moment."

Some of these pieces are highly witty and satirical. But the bonders are very averse to repeating them. One of them, on being asked by the student to repeat a stave, replied, "Ieg vil ikke være en Narr for Byen-folk:" (I wont play the fool to amuse the city folks.)

Here is a specimen of one native to this part done into English.

STAVE.

A. Oh! fair is the sight to see,
When the lads and the lasses are dancin';
The cuckoo, he calls from the tree,
And the birds through the green wood are glancin'!

B. Oh! 'tis fair in Vining-town,
When to kirk the lovers repair:
Of other light need they have none,
So light is the bride's yellow hair.

A. Oh! fair is the sight I trow,
When the bride the kirk goes in,
No need of the torch's glow,
So bright is her cherry chin.*

B. Her neck's like the driven snow,
Her hair's like the daffodil,
Her eyes in their sockets glow,
Like the sun rising over the hill.

The whole winds up with a description of the married life of the pair.

A. The cock he struts into the house,
The bonder gives him corn,
The flocks on the northern lea browse,
And the shepherd he blows his horn.

B. The shepherd the mountain ascends,
And the setting sun doth bide,
As blithe, when night descends,
As the bairns at merry Yule-tide.

* In the original, kinn = cheek.

CHAPTER V.

A lone farmhouse—A scandal against the God Thor—The headquarters of Scandinavian fairy lore—The legend of Dyrö Vo—A deep pool—A hint for alternate ploughboys—Wild goose geometry—A memorial of the good old times—Dutch falconers—Rough game afoot—Author hits two birds with one stone—Crosses the lake Totak—A slough of despond—An honest guide—A Norwegian militiaman—Rough lodgings—A night with the swallows—A trick of authorship—Yea or Nay.

At Kos-thveit, on the lake Totak, stands a lone farm-house, the proprietor of which procured me a man and a maid to row me over the dreary waters, now rendered drearier by a passing squall which overcast the sky. Pointing to the westward, where the lake narrowed, and receded under the shadows of the approaching mountains, the ferryman told me that yonder lay the famous Urebro Urden,*

* (See *Oxonian in Norway*, second edition, p. 170.) Close to this desolate spot lives the möller-gut (miller's lad) as he is called, whose real name is Tarjei Augaardson. This man is a famous fiddler. His countryman, Ole Bull

where the god Thor, when disguised by beer, lost his hammer, and cleared a road through the loose rocks while engaged in searching for it. Indeed, with the exception of Nissedal, in another part of Thelemarken, which is reputed as the head quarters of trolls and glamour, this gloomy lake and its vicinity abound, perhaps more than any part of Norway, in tales of Scandinavia's ancient gods and supernatural beings. The man also mentioned the legend of Dyrë Vo, which has been put into verse by Welhaven.

The following version will give some idea of the legend—

The bonniest lad all Vinje thro'
Was Dyrë of Vo by name,
Firm as a rock the strength, I trow,
Of twelve men he could claim.

---

hearing of his musical talents, sent for him, and he often played in public at Christiania and Bergen. He now only exercises his talents at bryllups (weddings), receiving at times ten dollars and upwards, which are chiefly contributed by the guests. With the money earned by him in the capital he bought a farm in this desolate spot; but he seems but ill-adapted for the bonder's life, and is much in debt. Could not he emulate Orpheus, and set some of these rocks dancing off which now encumber the land?

"Well Dyrë," quoth a neighbour bold,
"With trolls and sprites, like Thor of old,
To have a bout now fear ye?"
"Not a bit, were it mirk," said Dyrë.

Full soon, they tell, it did befal
That in the merry Yule-tide,
When cups went round, and beards wagg'd all,
And the ale was briskly plied:
All in a trice the mirth grew still:
Hark! what a sound came from the hill,
As a hundred steers lowed near ye.
"Well, now its right mirk," quoth Dyrë.

Then straightway he hied to Totak-vand,
And loosened his boat so snell;
But as he drew near to the other strand
He heard an eldritch yell.
"Who's fumbling in the churn? What ho!"
"But who art thou?—I'm Dyrë Vo,—
All in the moor, so weary;
And so dark as it is?" asked Dyrë.

"I'm from Ashowe, and must away
To Glomshowe to my lady;
Bring the boat alongside, and do not stay,
And put out your strength: so; steady."
"You must shrink a bit first," was Vo's reply,
"My boat is so little, and you so high;
Your body's as long as a tall fir-tree,
And, remember, its dark," said Dyrë.

The Troll he shrunk up, quite funny to see,
Ere the boat could be made to fit him,
Then Dyrë—the devil a pin cared he
For Trolls—began to twit him.
"Now tell me, good sir, what giant you are."
"No nonsense—you'll rue it—of joking beware,"
Growled the Troll, so dark and dreary.
"Besides, it is mirk," laughed Dyrë.

But the Troll by degrees more friendly grew,
And said, when he over was ferried,
"In your *trough* I'll leave a token, to shew
The measure of him you've wherried."
"Look under the thwarts when darkness wanes,
And something you'll find in return for your pains;
A trifle wherewith to make merry."
"For now it is mirk," said Dyrë.

When daylight appeared, a glove-finger of wool
He found in the boat—such a treasure—
Four skeps it did take to fill it full,
Dyrë uses it for a meal-measure.
Then straight it became a proverb or saw,
Dyrë Vo is the lad to go like Thor
'Gainst Trolls, and such like Feerie.
"Best of all when it's mirk," thought Dyrë.

"Very deep, sir," said the boatman, as I let out my spinning tackle, in the faint hopes of a trout for supper.

"Was the depth ever plumbed?" inquired I.

"To be sure, sir. That's a long, long time ago —leastways, I have heard so. There was an old woman at Kos-thveit yonder, whose husband had the ill-luck to be drowned in the lake. She set people to work to drag for his body, but nowhere on this side of the country could she get a rope sufficiently long for the work. So she had to send to the city for one. At last they reached the bottom, and found the lake as deep as it was broad, with a little to spare, for the rope reached from Kos-thveit to Rauland, just across the water, and then went twice round the church, which you see standing alone, yonder on the shore, three miles off."

"Who serves that church?" inquired I.

"Vinje's Priest," he answered. "That was his boat-house we passed."

We landed on the eastern shore of the lake, at a spot called Hadeland, where a cluster of farm-houses were to be seen upon a green slope, showing some symptoms of cultivation. Richard Aslackson Berge, the farmer at whose house I put up, a

grimy, ill-clad fellow, quite astounded me by the extent of his information. Catching sight of my wooden calendar, he immediately fetched an old almanack, which contained some explanation of the various signs upon the staff. Fancy one of your "alternate ploughboys"—as the Dean of Hereford and other would-be improvers of the clod-hopping mind, if I remember rightly, call them—fancy one of these fellows studying with interest an ancient Anglo-Saxon wooden calendar; and yet this man Berge, besides this, talked of the older and younger Edda, the poem of Gudrun, and, if my memory serves me, of the Nibelungenlied. He had also read the Heimskringla Saga. The promoters of book-hawking and village lending libraries will be interested to hear that this superior enlightenment was due to a small lending library, which had been established by a former clergyman of the district. There was a pithiness and simplicity about this man's talk which surprised me.

"The wild geese," says he, "come over here in the spring, and after tarrying a few days make over to the north, in the shape of a snow-plough."

Milton would have said, "Ranged in figure, wedge their way."

Several old swords and other weapons have been dug up in the vicinity, indicative of rugged manners and deeds quite in keeping with the rugged features of the surrounding nature. On an old beam in the hayloft is carved, in antique Norsk—"Knut So-and-so was murdered here in 1685"—the simple memorial of a very common incident in those days.

For the moderate sum of four orts (three and fourpence) I hire a horse and a man to the shores of the Miösvand. To the left of our route—path there is none—is a place called Falke Riese (Falcon's Nest), where Richard tells me that his grandfather told him he remembered a party of Dutchmen being located in a log-hut, for the purpose of catching falcons, and that they used duen (tame doves) to attract them. This is interesting, as showing the method pursued by the grandees of Europe, in the days of hawking, to procure the best, or Norwegian breed. At one time, this sport was also practised by the great people of this

country. Thus, from Snorro, it appears that Eywind used to keep falcons.

My guide, Ole, has been a soldier, but much prefers the mountain air to that of the town.

"In the town," says he, "it is so traengt," (in Lincolnshire, throng,) *i. e.*, no room to stir or breathe.

In the course of conversation he tells me he verily believes I have travelled over the whole earth.

While the horse is stopping to rest and browse on a spot which afforded a scanty pasturage, a likely-looking lake attracted my observation, and I was speedily on its rocky banks, throwing for a trout—but the trout were too wary and the water too still. While thus engaged, a distant horn sounds from a mountain on the right, sufficiently startling in such a desolate region. Was game afoot this morning, and was I presently to hear—

> The deep-mouthed blood-hound's heavy bay,
> Resounding up the hollow way.

Game was afoot, but not of the kind usually the object of the chase. The Alpine horn was blown

by a sæter-lad to keep off the wolves, as I was informed. As nothing was to be done with the rod, I tried the gun, and as we slope down through the stunted willows and birch copses that patch the banks of the Miösvand, I fall in with plenty of golden plover and brown ptarmigan, and manage to kill two birds with one stone. In other words, the shots that serve to replenish the provision-bag arouse a peasant on the further side, who puts over to us in his boat, and thus saves us a detour of some miles round the southern arm of the lake. As we cross over, I perceive far to the westward the snow-covered mountains of the Hardanger Fjeld, which I hope to cross. The westernmost end of the lake is, I understand, twenty-four English miles from this. To the eastward, towering above its brother mountains, is the cocks-combed Gausta, which lies close by the Riukan Foss, while all around the scenery is as gaunt and savage as possible. At Schinderland, where we land, after some palaver I procure a horse to Erlands-gaard, a cabin which lies on the hither side of the northern fork of the Miösen, said to be

seven miles distant. But the many detours we had to make to avoid the dangerous bogs, made the transit a long affair. In one place, when the poor nag, encumbered with my effects, sank up to his belly, I expected every moment to see the hungry bog swallow him up entirely. With admirable presence of mind he kept quite still, instead of exhausting himself in struggling, and then by an agile fling and peculiar sleight of foot, got well out of the mess.

The delay caused by these difficulties enabled me to bring down some more ptarmigan, and have a bang at an eagle, who swept off with a sound which to my ears seemed very like "don't you wish you may get it." But perhaps it was only the wind driving down the rocks and over the savage moorland.

The modest charge of one ort (tenpence), made by my guide for horse and man, not a little surprised me. I did not permit him to lose by his honesty.

Unfortunately, the boat at Erlands-gaard is away; so meanwhile I cook some plover and chat with the occupants of the cabin. Sigur Ketilson, one

of the sons, is a Konge-man, (one of "the king's men," or soldiers, mentioned in the ballad of "Humpty-dumpty.") He has been out exercising this year at Tönsberg, one hundred and forty English miles off. The mere getting thither to join his corps is quite a campaign in itself. On his road to head-quarters he receives fourteen skillings per diem as *viaticum*, and one skilling and a half for "*logiment*." A bed for three farthings! He is not forced to march more than two Norsk (fourteen English) miles a day. The time of serving is now cut down one-half, being five instead of ten years, and by the same law every able-bodied person must present himself for service, though instead of the final selection being made by lot, it is left to the discretion of one officer—a regulation liable to abuse.

At last the boat returns, and embarking in it by ten o'clock P.M., when it is quite dark, I arrive at the lone farm-house at Holvig. Mrs. Anna Holvig is reposing with her three children, her husband being from home. There being only one bed on the premises, I find that the hay this night must

be my couch. The neighbouring loft where I slept was a building with its four ends resting, as usual, on huge stones. At intervals during the night I am awoke by noises close to my ear, which I thought must be from infantine rats, whose organs of speech were not fully developed. In the morning I discover that my nocturnal disturbers were not rats, but swallows, who had constructed their mud habitations just under the flooring where I slept. "The swallow twittering from its straw-built nest" may gratify persons of an elegiac turn; but under the circumstances the noise was anything but agreeable.

"The breezy call of incense breathing morn," in which the same poet revels, was much more to my liking; indeed, one sniff of it made me as fresh as a lark, and I picked my way to the house by the lake side, and enjoyed my coffee. The little boy, Oiesteen Torkilson, though only eight years of age, has not been idle, and has procured a man and horse from a distant sæter. The price asked is out of all reason, as I don't hesitate to tell the owner. Before the bargain is struck, I jot down a few remarks in my journal. With the inquisitiveness

of her nation, the woman asks what I am writing. "Notices of what I see and think of the people; who is good, and who not." Out bolts the lady, to apprise the man of her discovery that "there's a chield amang ye taking notes, and faith he'll print it." My device succeeded. Presently she finished her confab with the peasant, and returned to say that he would take a more moderate payment.

I observed here, for the first time, the difference between the two words "ja" and "jo."

Have you seen a bear?—"Ja." Haven't you seen a bear?—"Jo." I have met educated Norwegians who had failed to observe the distinction. A perfectly similar distinction was formerly made in England between "yes" and "yea."*

* "Yea" and "nay," in Wiclif's time, and a good deal later, were the answers to questions framed in the affirmative. "Will he come?" To this would have been replied "yea" and "nay," as the case might be. But "Will he not come?" To this the answer would have been "yes" or "no." Sir T. More finds fault with Tyndal that in his translation of the Bible he had not observed this distinction, which was evidently going out even then,—that is, in the reign of Henry VIII.; and, shortly after, it was quite forgotten.—TRENCH'S *Study of Words.*

CHAPTER VI.

No cream—The valley of the Maan—The Riukan foss—German students—A bridge of dread—The course of true love never did run smooth—Fine misty weather for trout—Salted provisions—Midsummer night revels—The Tindsö—The priest's hole—Treacherous ice—A case for Professor Holloway—The realms of cloud-land—Superannuated—An ornithological guess—Field-fares out of reach of "Tom Brown"—The best kind of physic—Undemonstrative affection—Everywhere the same—Clever little horses.

THE path, I find, is at a higher level than I imagined, for, on reaching a sæter, no bunker (sour milk, with a thick coating of cream) is to be had, as the temperature is too low, the girl tells me, for the process of mantling to take place.

The horse being exceedingly lazy, I administered a rebuke to him, when he was not slow in returning the compliment, striking me with his heels in the thigh. Luckily I was close behind him, or the

thread of my story might have been abruptly snapped.

Pine now begins to take the place of birch, and we descend very rapidly into the valley of the Maan, pronounced Moan. To our right, among the trees, is heard the roar of the famous Riukan foss, which at one perpendicular shoot of nine hundred feet, discharges the waters of the great Miösvand and other lakes into the valley.

Leaving my guide to rest for a space, I plunged into the forest, and, after a precipitous descent, espy a cottage close to the falls. Here sat two strangers, regaling themselves on wild strawberries and milk, while the master of the hut was carving a wooden shoe, and the mistress suckling a baby. The travellers both wore spectacles and longish hair, and a pocket-compass depending from their necks. Each carried a *beau ideal* of a knapsack, and I knew them at once to be German students. After eating their meal, they observed that they had "yut yespeist," which stamped them at once to be from the Rhine; the pronunciation of *g* as *y* being the shibboleth of detection. "Eine *yute yebratene*

*y*ans ist eine *y*ute *y*abe *Y*oddes" (a yood yoast yoose is a yood yift of Yod), is a saying fastened on the Rhinelander by the more orthoepic Hanoverian. But it is more than doubtful whether these good people will have any opportunity in this country of tasting any such delicacy.

A few yards brought us to the magnificent amphitheatre of the Riukan, on the further side of which we have the fall full in view. On the face of the smooth, nearly perpendicular wall which shuts in the vast arena to the right of us, is an exceedingly narrow ledge—

> A bridge of dread,
> Not wider than a thread—

along which foolhardy people have occasionally risked their necks, either out of mere bravado or in order to make a short cut to the Miösvand, which I left this morning. This is the famous Mari-stien—everybody knows the legend about it—sadly exemplifying the fact that the course of true love never did run smooth: how young Oiesteen fell from it on his way to a stolen interview with Mary of Vestfjordalen, and she lost her senses in consequence, and daily haunted the spot for years

afterwards, pale and wan, and silent as a ghost, and is even now seen when the shades of evening fall, hovering over the giddy verge of "The remorseless deep which closed o'er the head of her loved Lycidas."

But as neither I nor the Teutons could see any possible good in risking our necks for nought, and valued a whole skin and unbroken bones, after assaying to take in and digest the wonderful sight, we presently retraced our steps without setting foot on ledge.

Five miles below this is Dœl, where some accommodation, at a dear rate, is to be obtained of Ole Tarjeison.

Next morning, the summit of Gausta, which rises just over the Maan to the height of 5688 feet, and commands a magnificent view of the district of Ringerike, is covered with cloud. But what is bad weather to others, is good in the eyes of the fisherman. So, instead of lamenting "the wretched weather," I get out my trout-rod and secure some capital trouts (at times they are taken here seven pounds in weight), part of which I have sprinkled with salt, and put into the provision-bag, with a

view to the journey I purpose taking from hence across the Fjeld to Norway's greatest waterfall, the Vöringfoss, in the Hardanger.

While sauntering about, a printed notice, suspended in the passage of the house, attracts my attention, which afforded a considerable insight into the morals of the Norwegian peasant. It was dated April 18, 1853, and was to this effect: The king has heard with much displeasure that the old custom of young unmarried men running about at night, sometimes in flocks (flokkeviis), especially on Sundays and saints'-days, after the girls, while asleep in the cow-houses, has been renewed. His Majesty, therefore, summons all Christian and sober-minded parents, and house-fathers, to protect their children and servants from this nocturnal rioting. He also calls upon them to keep the two sexes apart, for the sake of order and good morals; and if the same shall be detected conniving at these irregularities, they shall, for the first offence, be mulcted one dollar seventy-two skillings; for the second offence, double that amount, &c. The young men shall have the same punishment; and,

for the third offence, be confined from three to six months with hard labour in a fortress. Girls who receive such clandestine visits, shall be punished in like manner. Informers shall be entitled to receive the fine. All Government officers are required to make known these presents. This notice must be read at churches, posted in conspicuous places, and sent about by messengers.

Here, then, I obtained the certain knowledge of a custom—similar to one which still lingers in Wales—which I had suspected to be prevalent, but the existence of which the inhabitants of the country, for some reason or other, I found slow to admit. The above ordinance is a renewal of a similar one made 4th March, 1778, from which it appears that the immorality of "Nattefrieri" (night-courting) has long prevailed in Norway.

Eight English miles below this the Maan finds ample room and verge enough to expatiate in the deep Tindsö, which is, perhaps, one of the most dangerous lakes in Norway, being subject to frightfully sudden storms; while the precipitous cliffs that bound it, for the most part only

afford foot-hold to a fly, or such like climbers. There is an old tale about this lake, illustrative of the dangers to which a clergyman is subject in the discharge of his duties. Many years ago, the parson of the parish had to cross over the lake to do duty in the "annex church" at Hovind. The weather was threatening; but his flock awaited him, and so he started, commending himself to God and his good angels. Long before he approached his destination, the wind had so increased in violence that the boatmen were overpowered, and the boat was dashed to pieces against the adamantine walls of the Haukanes Fjeld. All on board were lost but the priest, who was carried by the billows into a small cleft in the rock, far above the usual high-water mark. For three days he sat wedged in this hole, from whence there was no exit. On the fourth day, the winds and waves abated; and some boatmen, who were rowing by, as good fortune would have it, heard the faint cry for assistance which the captive gave as he saw them from his "coin of vantage." And so he was rescued from his terrible

predicament; and the notch in the wall still goes by the name of the Prestehul, "Priest's-hole."

Bishop Selwyn, with his well-found yacht, sailing among the deep bays of New Zealand, confirming and stablishing the Maoris in the Christian faith, will have to wait a long time before he can meet with such an adventure as the Tindsö priest. But then you'll say, in winter time it is all right, and the parson can dash along over the ice, defying the dangers of the deep and the bristling rocks. Not so, however; there are not unfrequently weak places in the ice, which look as strong as the rest, but which let in the unfortunate traveller. Not long ago, five men and a horse were thus engulphed. So in the Heimskringla Saga, King Harold and his retinue perish by falling through the ice on the Randsfjord, at a place where cattle-dung had caused it to thaw.

Giving up all thoughts of ascending the Gausta, —as I understand the chance of a view from it in this misty weather is very precarious,—I hire a horse from one Hans Ostensen Ingulfsland, to

convey my luggage to Waage, on the Miösvand. Hans was ill, apparently of a deranged stomach and liver, and, with rueful aspect, consulted me on his case. All the medicine he had was what he called a *probatum*, in a small bottle. The probatum turned out to be a specific for the gravel, as I saw from a label on the flask; so I gave him what was more likely to suit his case, some blue pill and rhubarb.

Hans' father used to entertain travellers, but his charges became so high that all his customers forsook him; and M. Doel, who appears to be in a fair way to imitate his predecessor, set up in "the public line."

Hitherto the valley has been clear of cloud; and on arriving at Vaa, I stop to rest, and sketch the distant smoke of the Riukan ascending from its rocky cauldron towards heaven. Presently the mist, which had all the morning hidden the "comb" of Gausta, threw off a few flakes; these gradually extend and unite, and pour along the mountain-tops to my left, and in a few minutes reach to and absorb the smoke of Riukan, and hide

it from view. Up boil the fogs, as if by magic, from all sides; and, like the image of Fame, in *Virgil,* the vapour rises from the depths of the valley, and reaches up to the sky. Doubtless it was the spirit of the place, wroth at my profane endeavour to represent her shrine on paper; and the sullen "moan" of the stream might, by an imaginative person, have been supposed to be the utterance of her complaint.

In the foreground, intently watching my operations as he sits upon a rock, is old Peer Peerson Vaa, who being over eighty, is past work, and having no children, has sold his Gaard to one Ole Knutzen, on the condition of having his liv-brod (life-bread)—*i.e.*, being supported till his death. This is not an uncommon custom in Norway. He is "farbro" (uncle) to the man at Dœl.

Observe the simplicity of the language. So the Norsk for "aunt" is "moerbro,"—mother's brother.

I here obtain a dollar or two of small change, with which I am ill provided. It is curious, by-the-bye, to see how one of these bonders

looks at half-a-dozen small coins before he is able to reckon the amount. This is in consequence of the infrequency of money up the country.

As we ascend the Pass, I observe some dusky-looking birds, which turn out to be ringouzels. According to a Norwegian whom I consulted on the subject, they are the substitute, in a great measure, if not altogether, in this part of the country, for the

> Ouzel cock, so black of hue,
> With orange-tawny bill,

whose plaintive song so delights us in Great Britain.

Several fieldfares, also, chattered in a startled and angry manner as they rose from the low birch bushes, impatient, no doubt, for the period, now fast approaching, when their young ones will be ready to fly and start for Germany, one of their chief winter *habitats*, where, under the appellation of "Krammets-vogel," they will appear in the bill of fare at the hotels. What an odd notion, to be sure, of all these birds going so far to lie-in! What an infinity of trouble they would save themselves

if they stopped, for instance, during the breeding period, in Germany or England! Aye? but then they would be exposed to the depredations of "Tom Brown" and others of the genus schoolboy, whose destructive and adventurous qualities generally first develop themselves in the bird-nesting line.

One of the straps which fastened my luggage to the horse having broken, my guide very soon constructs, of birch twig, a strap and buckle which holds as fast as any leathern one I ever saw. This fertility of invention is due to the non-division of labour. What could an Englishman have done under similar circumstances?

Halvor Halvorsen, my guide, is a poor weakly fellow, and having seen me prescribe for Ingulfsland, he asks me if I can do anything for him. Good living and less hard work are all he wants; but, unfortunately, while he has plenty of the latter, he gets but little of the former. On his back is a great load of milk-pails, and some provisions (potatoes and flad-brod) for his spouse, who is taking care of a sæter, which we shall pass.

At length we arrive there: it is a cot of unhewn

stone-slabs, and before the door a lot of dried juniper-bushes, the only firing which the desolate plateau affords. Gro Johannsdatter, a really pretty-looking young woman, with delicate features, smiles in a subdued manner as we enter, and thanks her husband quietly and monosyllabically for bringing up the food. This, together with her little boy, she proceeds to examine with inquisitive, eager eye. The larder was doubtless nearly empty. She then gives her husband, whom she had not seen for some time, a furtive look of affection, but nothing more—no embrace, no kiss. How undemonstrative these people are! It is a remarkable characteristic of the lower orders of Norway, that, unlike their betters, they never think of kissing or embracing before strangers. Compare this with those demonstrations in Germany and France, where not the opposite sexes, but great bearded men, will kiss each other on either cheek with the report of popguns, regardless of bystanders.

Presently they go into the inner compartment of the hut, and then at length I believe I heard the sound of a kiss. While she makes up the fire, and

boils some milk for her husband, who has many hours of mountain still before him, I endeavour to take a slight sketch of her and the abode.

No sooner does she become aware of my intentions, than, with true feminine instinct, she begs me to wait a moment, while she divests herself of an ugly clout of a kerchief which hides a very pretty neck. The sketch concluded, she asks for a sight of it, and, with a pleased smile, exclaims, "No, no; I'm not so smuk (pretty, smug) as that."

These châlets, by-the-bye, are not called sæter in this part of Norway, but stol, or stöl. They are very inferior in accommodation to those in the Hardanger district and elsewhere.

Beyond crossing a river, Humle-elv, when, by my guide's recommendation, I spring on the horse's back, I find nothing noted in my diary concerning the rest of the day's journey.

These little horses will carry up and down steep mountains from fifteen Norwegian Bismark lbs. (nearly two hundred weight English) up to twenty-two. How the little nag, with my luggage

and myself on his back, managed to win his way over the stream, which was at least two feet deep, and among the large slippery stones on its bottom, it was difficult to divine. They are very cats for climbing, though they do not share that animal's aversion to water, which they take to as if it was their natural element.

CHAPTER VII.

An oasis—Unkempt waiters—Improving an opportunity—The church in the wilderness—Household words—A sudden squall—The pools of the Quenna—Airy lodgings—Weather-bound—A Norwegian grandpapa—Unwashed agriculturists—An uncanny companion—A fiery ordeal—The idiot's idiosyncrasy—The punctilious parson—A pleasant query—The mystery of making flad-brod—National cakes—The exclusively English phase of existence—Author makes a vain attempt to be "hyggelig"—Rather queer.

It was already dark when we emerged from the morasses and loose rocks, and lighted by good luck on the little patch of green sward on the northern shores of the Misövand, adjoining the farm-house of Waagen. On referring to the map, reader, and finding this spot set down upon it, your imagination, of course, pictures a regular village, or something of that sort; but this is not the case. A couple of gaards, with a belt of swampy grass land, are all the symptoms of man

to enliven this intensely solitary waste of grey rocks, bog, birch, and water.

The proprietors are Gunnuf Sweynsen and his brother Torkil, together with one Ole Johnson, a cousin. Gunnuf is absent, guiding the Germans across the Fjeld.

The best method to proceed is, I find, to take boat from here to Lien, which is about twenty-four miles distant, at the very top or north-eastern end of the lake; a horse must then be procured to carry my effects for the other seventy English miles across the mountains. A bargain is soon struck with Johnson, who has once before traversed most of the route; and for the sum of eight dollars (thirty-six shillings English) he undertakes to horse and guide me the whole way to the Hardanger.

The stabur, or hay-loft, affords me a tolerable night's resting-place. There were no women-folk about to make things comfortable; so I managed with the three unkempt *valets de chambre* instead, who boiled me some coffee, greased my boots, and did the needful quite as well as one of those short-

jacketed, napkin-carrying, shilling-seeking German kellners who supersede the spruce chamber-maid of the English inn.

By early day we walk across the dew-dank meadow down to the shore of the lake, while a few black ducks, which scuttle off at our approach, warn me to get my fowling-piece ready. The water is so shallow near the land, that the boat gets aground; and the men are in the water in a moment and pushing her off, and into the boat again in a twinkling as she shot into the deeps, the water streaming from their legs in cascades, about which they seemed to care as little as the black ducks aforesaid.

As we glide out into the offing, my spinning-tackle is got out, as I determine to improve the opportunity, and see what the lake can boast of in the way of fish. A banging trout is soon fixed on the deadly triangles which garnishes the sides of the bright metal minnow, to the great delight of the boatmen, to whom the operation is entirely novel.

Take warning, piscatorial reader, from me, and

mind you use a plaited line with spinning-tackle. In my hurry I had used a fine twisted one, which kinked up into a Gordian knot the moment it was slack, and I lost some time in getting out another line.

Yonder, on the western shore of the lake, standing in the midst of the silent wilderness, rises the solitary house of God where the people of these parts worship, its humble spire of wood reflected on the surface of the lake. With the exception of Hovden Church and our boat, the waters and shores exhibit nothing else indicative of the proximity of man.

The congregation must be a very scattered one, for if ever people dwelt few and far between, it is in these solitudes. Not one of the three clergymen of the parishes of Vinje, Sillejord, and Tind, who share in the Sunday duty which is performed here a dozen times a year, can live under fifty miles off. A Diocesan Spiritual Aid Society is certainly wanted in these regions.

Such words as "hyre," to hire; "ede," to eat; "beite," to bite; "aarli," early, let drop by the

boatmen in the course of conversation, remind me that I am in a part of the country where a portion of the old tongue still keeps its ground, such as it was when brought over to England, and engrafted on its congener, the Anglo-Saxon, nearly a thousand years ago.

Quite a tempest of wind now suddenly springs up, sending us along at a great pace, and rendering it difficult, when I now and then caught a trout by the tackle trailing astern, to lay-to and secure the fish. The twenty-four miles were soon behind us, and we found ourselves in the Quenna river. "Ducks ahead!" was the cry of the lively Torkil, and my fowling-piece soon added fowl to the fish. No fear of starvation now, even though the larder at Lien prove to be empty.

As it is some hours to nightfall, I rig my fly-rod, and try the pools of the Quenna. Some fat, cinnamon-coloured flies, which I found reposing under the stones, being hardly yet strong enough on the wing to disport themselves aloft, gave me a hint as to the sort of fly that would go down, and, my book containing some very similar insects,

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I had no lack of sport, securing several nice fish. They do run as large as five pounds, I hear.

On returning to the small farm-house where I was to spend the night, a horse, I found, had been procured; and as a beautiful evening gave promise of a fine day on the morrow, we prepared to start by earliest dawn. My bed of skins was, as usual, laid in the hay-shed; and I retired in the highest possible spirits at the prospect of crossing the desolate and grand mountain-plateau that separates us from the western shores of Norway.

As this spot stands at an elevation of some three thousand feet above the sea, there were no pine-trees growing near; so the shed was constructed of undressed birch poles, and was about as weather-tight as a blackbird's wicker cage. The chinks near my pillow I stopped up with loose hay. Vain precaution! Before dawn I awoke, cold and stiff. The weather had changed; my sleeping-chamber was become a very temple of the winds, and the storm made a clean breach through the tenement, having swept out the quasi-oakum which I had stuffed into the crevices.

On issuing from my dormitory, I found the weather was frightful. A deluge of rain, and wind, and thick mist filled the space between earth and sky. To attempt the passage of the Fjeld was not to be thought of, as there is no road whatever. Departure, therefore, being out of the question, I made up my mind to another day's sojourn at the cottage, which was the most comfortless, dirty spot I ever met with in Thelemarken; and that is saying a good deal. During the day, most of the natives—Ole, my guide, among the rest—were away at the châlet. Besides myself, there were only two other persons left at home; and these, as my journey is at a stand-still, I may as well describe.

A tall, old man, his height bowed by the weight of more than eighty years, sat in a kubbe-stol—a high backed-chair, made out of a solid trunk of tree, peculiar to Thelemarken—warming his knees at the fire in the corner, and mumbling to himself. Presently he lay down on a bench, and snored. Before long up he got, and spooned up a quantity of cold porridge; and then, turning his bleared

eyes at me, as I sat finishing a sketch of the interior of the dwelling, including himself, croaked out,—

"Er du Embedsman?" (Art thou a Government servant?)

"No."

"Well, that's odd."

And then he commenced warming his knees and mumbling, and then snored as before, extended on the bench; and before long, rose and spooned up porridge. These were his daily and hourly avocations. His name was a grand one—Herrbjörn Hermanson—but the owner of it was disgusting. No wonder; he never washes at all, so that the appearance of his countenance may be conceived. When he departs this life he will undergo ablution.

Apropos of this, in the absence of a better occupation, I gave a classic turn to the affair, and in my thoughts altered a line of Juvenal:—

> Pars bona *Norwegiæ* est, si verum admittimus, in qua
> Nemo sumit *aquam* nisi mortuus.

That I don't think is a libel. Indeed, with "the

wretchlessness of most unclean living"—this application of the words of the Seventeenth Article is not mine, but a late geological Dean of Westminster's, in his sermon on the cholera—the inhabitants of this country generally have a very practical acquaintance.

The other person who kept at home all day, was a young fellow of thirty, with swarthy face and gleaming eyes. His dark, shaggy head of hair was surmounted by a cap like that worn by the Finns, with a bunch of wild flowers stuck in a red band that encircled it. His dress was a short jacket, skin knee-breeches, and jack-boots. His time was occupied between smearing the boots with reindeer fat, sharpening a knife of formidable dimensions, and casting small bullets; while ever and anon he would repair to a small looking-glass of three inches square, hung against the wall, and contemplate a very forbidding, peculiar set of features therein. There was something uncanny about the look of the fellow which I did not much relish. Presently he takes my pipe from the table, and coolly commences smoking it. Subsequently

I find that Joh is not as other men are, and only half in possession of his senses.

Some twenty years ago tame reindeer were introduced upon these mountains from Finmark, and great things were expected from the importation; but the enterprize did not answer; and a couple of years ago the proprietors slaughtered all the deer, and there was a great merry-making at a farm called Norregaard on the occasion. Deep drinking was the order of the day; raw potato brandy was gulped down in profuse quantities. For forty-eight hours without intermission did the bout continue. Like Paddy's noddle in respect to the shillelagh, most of these mountaineers' heads are proof against the knock-me-down power of strong alcohol. Not so Joh's, who was one of the party; in the midst of the festivities he lost his reason, and went stark staring mad. It was long before he quieted down; since then he has never done any work, or shared in the labours of the rest of the family; nothing will persuade him, however, to touch brant-viin now. The burnt child dreads the fire—the brandy must formerly have had a

fearful fascination for him. I drew a cork from a small flask with me; the moment the sound caught his ear, his face whirled round to where I sat with the rapidity of an automaton, and he glared a look of peculiar meaning at me from underneath his heavy eyebrows, which at the time I could not comprehend.

But though he is averse to all regular work, there is one thing I find on which he spares no pains,—reindeer stalking. This is the occupation on which he starts day after day, without speaking a word to the rest of the household; in season and out of it, he is continually alone on the mountains around. Outside the door are a dozen pairs of antlers, the trophies of his skill. Only last week he shot a female deer, the fifth or sixth this summer, although the season fixed by law has not yet arrived. But he is out of the ken of informers.

Drying on the wall outside is a rein-skin, and in the house are two or three hides which his ingenuity has converted into leather. His boots are of that material—so are his knee-breeches. He is often

absent for days on the mountain, not unfrequently sleeping under a rock. If he discovers a flock of deer in a spot where the nature of the ground will not permit of his getting within shot, he hides till they move, dodging about unperceived. Not long since, he killed two specimens of the Fjeld-frass, or glutton, whose scent is said to be incredibly keen, nosing wounded game miles off. One of these wretches he saw track and catch and kill a wounded (skamskudt) deer; and while it was thus occupied he stole upon it unawares, and became possessed of deer and glutton both.

At all events, he showed more gumption on this occasion than an English parson with whom I am acquainted. One day he saw that diminutive British equivalent to the glutton—a weazel—pursuing similar tactics—overtake an unfortunate hare. As usual, poor puss was fascinated, and her legs refused their office in the way of flight; but each time the ferocious little creature tried to fasten upon her, she knocked it over with her paws, jumping at it and pushing it over. Off set the parson, not to smash the brute with his cane, but

to tell his Grace's keeper. It is needless to add, that when he returned with that functionary the vampire quadruped had got on the hare's neck, and sucked all the blood out of its veins, managing to get clean off to boot.

But to return to Joh. Observing me engaged in frying trout, he suddenly exclaims—the first word he had spoken—"Kann De spise reen?" (can you eat reindeer?) "To be sure." Upon which he bolted out of the hut, and soon returned with a lump of venison weighing perhaps four pounds, which he silently placed on the board. It was evident to me that Joh was a person of capabilities; and I soon got him to work, repairing my knapsack and gun-case. A few artificial flies, of which he was not slow in comprehending the meaning, rewarded his endeavours in the saddler's art.

Towards evening the family returned from the sæter,—two strapping maidens, Kari and Gunhild, among the number. The occupation in which some of the party forthwith engaged—the mystery or craft of making flad-brod, the national esculent—soon drove me into the fresh air. At a table sits

one of the girls, roller in hand, busily engaged in rolling out huge flat cakes of dough, sprinkling them with water by means of a little brush. The Alfred of the occasion was the father of Joh, who, with a sort of trowel, whips up the cakes, and flaps them down on the girdle-iron, a flat disk, about three-quarters of a yard in diameter. At the proper moment he gives them a turn, and in a minute they are done, and whisked into the hands of the other girl, who piles them on a table. The girdle-iron being large, the smoke is prevented ascending the chimney in its natural way, and becomes dissipated all over the one sitting-room of the house, and this it is that drives me out of it.

This favourite food is sometimes prepared in sufficient quantities for a whole winter's consumption. I have seen, in a large gaard, nearly a dozen Abigails hard at work kneading, sprinkling, rolling, and baking the cakes. The only time when they are endurable to the palate, in my opinion, is when they are just warm off the fire. When warm, they are flexible, and are then folded up compactly, if wanted for travelling.

Another national cake, something like a pikelet in taste and consistency, is the waffel-kage, which is about half an inch thick, oblong, and moulded into squares; this is by no means to be despised.

I was early down among the hay for the purpose of recruiting my vital energies for the morrow, when our work was cut out for us, and plenty of it. The interstices between the bars of the cage were weather-tightened afresh, and I was resolved to be as cosy and comfortable as circumstances would permit. Neither the French nor the Germans have any word to represent that very pleasant accident of our being, which we call comfort; so they borrow the word and its derivatives out and out from our English vocabulary when they desire to express a thing, which, after all, they cannot possibly have experienced practically. Only fancy, then, the Norwegians presuming to think of such a phase of existence. And yet they have a word said to answer exactly to our word "comfortable," — viz., "hyggelig," from hygge; which is, no doubt, identical with our word "to hug," or embrace.

Anyhow, my efforts to be "hyggelig" were not successful that night. Like the Grecian hero under different circumstances, I could not rest; no wonder, therefore, I was up and stirring early; indeed, I had been stirring all night. The sun shone out brightly, every leaf and blade of grass and rock reflecting his rays from their moist surfaces. The rain had ceased falling from the clouds, but not from the mountains. The river was brimful and roaring fiercely, the toying cascades of twenty-four hours ago now swollen into blustering cataracts, while fresh ones were improvised for the occasion. But, alas! I was ill fitted for enjoying the glorious scene. Ague-fits shot through my limbs and frame; and even before we started, I felt as if I had already travelled many miles.

It was clear I had caught cold, if nothing worse; but there was no help for it. The very idea of stopping another day in this den, with Joh and Herrbjörn for my companions, was intolerable. Seventy miles, it is true, lay before me, and not a house on the route. Behind me it was a good

fifty miles back to civilized life, and double or treble that distance to a doctor. "Nulla retrorsum," too, is my motto, unless things come to such a pass as they did with Havelock's men on the road to Lucknow. The upshot was that I trusted in Providence, and set my breast manfully to the mountain, supported by that inward consciousness of endurance so dear to a Briton, which every now and then tried to express itself, comically enough, by feebly humming "There's life in the old dog yet."

CHAPTER VIII.

Northwards—Social colts—The horse shepherd—The tired traveller's sweet restorer, tea—Troll-work—Snow Macadam—Otter hunting in Norway—Normaends Laagen—A vision of reindeer—The fisherman's hut—My lodging is on the cold ground—Making a night of it—National songs—Shaking down—A slight touch of nightmare.

LEAVING the angry Quenna, we struck northward up a gradual ascent of rock, polished apparently by former rains, its surface fissured at intervals by deep cracks, and dabbed with patches of yellow moss, dwarf birch, and glaucous willow, but, for the most part, fortunately affording capital walking ground. A covey of grey ptarmigan, a snipe or two, and some golden plover, rose before us; but I felt so weak and ill that I had not the heart to load my fowling-piece, which the little horse bore, along with my other effects, attached to the straddle.

As we journey along, a distant neigh (in Thelemarken speech "neija," in Norwegian, "vrinske,")

reaches my ear, and I descry three colts bounding down the rocks to us. On joining our party, seemingly tired of the loneliness of the mountain, and delighted at the idea of a new equine companion, they dance round our little nag in most frolicksome mood. In spite of all we can do to prevent them, they stick to us, now in front, now alongside, now at our rear. At this moment a man's voice is heard, and a wild figure in frieze jacket, of the true Thelemarken cut, knee-breeches, and bare calves, rushes up breathless. "Well, Ambrose," said my guide, "I thought they were yours, but they would follow us. We couldn't stop them." Indeed, Ambrose found the task equally difficult. He had never taken lessons from Mr. Rarey. It was only by seizing the ringleader by his forelock, and hanging heavily with the other arm on his neck, he managed to turn him from the error of his way, which would most likely have only terminated with our day's journey's end.

"And who is Ambrose?" inquired I. "Where is his Stöl? I see no symptoms of one."

"Stöl! bless you, langt ifra (far from it). He

is a flytte-maend. He comes up on the mountain with a lot of horses and Nöd (Scoticè nowt, horned cattle), for about six weeks in the summer. He has a bag of meal, and he lives upon that and the milk of one milking cow, which he has with him. At night, he sleeps under a rock or stone, flitting about from place to place, wherever he can find grass for the cattle. He receives a small sum a head for his trouble, when he has taken them back safe and sound."

Hard life of it, thought I. Bad food and worse lodging; not to mention that the beasts of prey occasionally diminish the number of his charge, and with it the amount of his earnings.

After toiling along for twenty English miles of treeless wilderness, skirting several lakes, floundering through many bogs, and sitting on the horse as he forded one or two rivers, we reached a knoll, which the guide called Grodhalse. It was a curious spot: itself green and smiling with grassy herbage; behind it, higher up the slope, patches of unmelted snow; while at our feet ran a rill of snow-water.

"We must qvile (*i.e.*, while=rest) here a bit,"

said Ole. "There is no other grass to be found for many miles."

"Well, then, light a fire in a moment," said I, a cold shudder running through me the very moment I stood still, and I at once enveloped myself in my pea-coat, buttoning the collar over my ears. "Fill that kettle with water, and have it boiling as soon as ever you can. Here are some matches." The green prickly juniper scrub, which he forthwith dragged up by the roots, soon blazed up with the proverbially transient crackling of fire among the thorns; and the little copper kettle which I had prudently caused to be brought soon succeeded in first simmering and then boiling. Dickens's kettle on the hob never uttered such delightful music.

If I had been philosophically inclined, and had possessed a thermometer, which I did not, I might have availed myself of the opportunity of ascertaining the exact height we had reached, by seeing at what number of degrees the fluid boiled. But what was much more to the purpose, I had some tea at hand, and two quarts of the hot infusion;

with a thimblefull of brandy, were soon under my belt. Never did opium, or bang, or haschish-eater experience such a sweet feeling stealing over the sense. Talk of a giant refreshed with wine: give me tea when I am knocked up. The chemistry-of-common-life people will talk to you about Theïne and its nutritious qualities, but until that moment I did not know what tea would do for you. My eyes, which just before were half blind, saw again. My blood, which seemed to be curdled into thick, heavy lumps, in my veins, was liquified afresh. That of St. Januarius never underwent such a quick metamorphosis. Mr. Waterton will excuse the allusion.

The knoll was at a very high level; the snow behind us, and the icy runnel issuing from its bowels at our feet, gave a keenness to the air, but the tea* put me in a genial perspiration, the pea-coat aiding and abetting by keeping in the caloric. And when the little horse, refreshed by his nibble,

* "Under circumstances of most privation I found no comfort so welcome as tea. We drank immoderately of it, and always with advantage."—*Dr. Kane's Arctic Voyage.*

was caught and reloaded, I loaded my fowling-piece, and felt quite strong enough to carry it. Before long we were among some grey ptarmigan, and I brought one or two down.*

"Curious spot, this," said I, to the guide, as we came to an amphitheatrical ridge of abraded rock, on the very edge of which rested huge blocks† of stone, some pivoted on their smallest face. The cause of the phenomenon was evident. The glacier power, which formerly moved these stones onward, day by day, had been arrested—*opera imperfecta manebant*—and so the blocks came to a stand still where they now are. "They must have been placed there by the Trolls," I observed, giving

* The greatest height at which grouse have been seen was by Schlagentweit in the Himalaya, 11,000 feet above the sea.

† Many of these stones are so nicely balanced, that they may be moved without losing their equilibrium. Hence they are called Rokke-steene (rocking-stones). Formerly they were looked upon as ancient funereal monuments, like similar upright stones in Great Britain and elsewhere. Lieut. Mawry, who overturned the Logan stone, and was forced to set it up again at his own expense, might indulge his peculiar tastes with impunity in this country.

a peep at Ole's countenance. "Kanskee" (perhaps), was his slow and thoughtful reply.

"You ought to see this in winter time," he continued. "No stones to be seen then—no impediments. We go straight ahead. I travelled last winter, on snow-shoes, sixty miles in the day."

Winter is, emphatically, the time for locomotion here; the crooked ways are made straight, and the mountains smooth.

"What's that?" said I, pointing to a snail, browsing on the irregularly round leaf of a species of dwarf sorrel, which grows high on the mountains. A "sneel," said he. "Snecke" is the modern Norwegian appellation.

Ole is a bit of a sportsman, and has committed havoc among the reindeer. Last winter he killed a couple of otters, and got two dollars and a half for their skins.

"And where did you find the otters?" inquired I, curious to know whether these animals imitate the seal and walrus, and make breathing holes in the solid ice. "Oh, they keep in the foss-pools of the rivers, which are the only places not frozen

over. Now and then they cut across the land from one pool to another. I followed them on snow-shoes, and killed them with a stave. A man paa ski (on snow-shoes) can overtake an otter."

"It is strange," he went on, "we have seen no 'reen.' I never came over these mountains without seeing them."

But in fact the day had now become overcast, and, fearful of a relapse, I had abstained from stopping to examine the surrounding objects more narrowly. We had now arrived on the left of a lake, about fourteen miles long, the name of which is Normaends Laagen. Between us and the lake intervened a stony plain, grassed over at intervals, perhaps half a mile in breadth; while close to our left, some little still valleys ran up towards the higher plateau.

"There they are," exclaimed Ole, pointing to ten reindeer, feeding about two hundred yards off, between us and the lake. The discovery was mutual and simultaneous; for, with an oblique squint at us, their white scuts flew up, and they trotted leisurely to the southward.

"Shall I put a bullet into the gun?" asked I.

"No use whatever," said Ole. "They'll be miles off in a few minutes."

And, sure enough, I could see them clearing the ground at a lazy canter, and presently disappear behind some rising ground.

Our lodging for the night was to be at a place called Bessebue. This was a stone hut erected by some fishermen, who repair hither in the autumn with a horse or two and some barrels of salt, and catch the trout which abound in the lake. At that period, the fish approach the shore from out of the deeps to spawn, and are taken in a garn, *i.e.*, standing net of very fine thread. At other times the hut is uninhabited. But to my guide's surprise we find that there are occupants. These are two brothers from Urland, on the Sogne Fjord, about sixty miles from this. They are fine young fellows, named Nicholas and Andreas Flom, who have come up here with 110 head of cattle to feed on the shores of the lake. None but a Norwegian farmer would think of making such an excursion as this. In September they will drive them direct across the

mountains to Kongsberg for sale. A drove of this sort, I find, is called drift,* and the drovers drifte-folk.

With much goodnature these young fellows offered to share with us all the accommodation that Bessebue afforded. "But," said they, "we have already got three travellers arrived, who are going to stop the night."

Now Bessebue, or Bessy's bower, as I mentally nicknamed it, albeit there was not a ghost of a Bessy about the premises, though it might in an ordinary way lodge a couple of wayfarers did not seem to offer anything like ample room and verge enough for "the seven sleepers" who proposed lodging there that night. Its accommodation consisted of one room, built of dry stones, with a hole in one corner of the roof for a chimney, the floor being divided into two unequal parts by a ledge or slab of stone, which served for table, and chair, and shelf. The room might be seven or eight feet square, (not

* Anton Shiel he loves not me,
For I gat two drifts of his sheep.
Border Ballad.

so big as the bed of Ware,) part of which, however, was taken up by certain butter and milk pails and horse furniture. So, how we were all to sleep I did not know. Nevertheless, the shivering demon was again clapperclawing me—"Poor Tom's acold."—The good effects of the tea had evaporated, and aches of all sorts throbbed within my frame. So I settled down passively on the stone ledge, and warmed my wet toes against the reeking, sputtering brands of juniper twig that blazed at intervals, and served to show, in the advancing night, the black, slimy, damp-looking sides of the hut. Above my head was the smoke hole; behind me, on the floor, were the skins which formed the drovers' couch.

After swallowing a fresh jorum of tea, I sank into this, my peacoat all around me, and my sou'-wester, with its flannel lining and ear-covers tied under my chin; the younger drover, with all the consideration of a tender nurse, tucking me in under the clothes. In spite of my superfluity of clothing, and the smoke with which the apartment was filled, I had great difficulty in getting warm.

After eating their simple suppers by the light of the fire, a song was proposed, and one of the three strangers proceeded to sing, in a clear manly voice, the national song on Tordenskiold.*

The glow of the juniper wood, which had now burnt down into a heap of red embers, lit up the features, grave but cheery, of the singer and the hearers; and all sick as I was, I enjoyed the whole immensely, after a dreamy fashion, and longed for the brush of a Schalken to represent the strange scene. Here we were, on a wild, trackless, treeless, savage mountain, with creature comforts none, and yet these simple fellows, without any effort, were enjoying themselves a vast deal more than many with all the conventional appliances and means to secure mirth.

The song of "Gamle Norge," the "Rule

* Tordenskiold was a renowned admiral. According to tradition, he never would have a man on board his ship who would not stand up at a few paces with outstretched arm, and a silver coin in his fingers, and let him have a shot at it. The Norwegian still considers it an honour to trace his descent from one who served under Tordenskiold.

Britannia" of the North, of course succeeded. After this a song-book was produced from a crevice under the eaves, and, as the fire was nearly out, and no more fuel was inside the hut, a candle-end, which I had brought with me to grease my boots, being lit, enabled the minstrel to sing a ditty by inch of candle. It was one in honour of the Norsk kings, from Harald Haarfager* downwards, by Wergeland, said to be Norway's best poet. This closed the entertainment.

"We must get to bed, I think, now," said Nicholas; "it is waxing latish, and I must be up by dawn, after the kreüturen (cattle). I say, holloa, you Englishman, Metcal; can you make room for me and Andreas?"

"You can try, but I really don't see how it is to be managed, we are such big fellows; I'll sit on the ledge, if you like."

* It begins thus—
Lord of the North is Harald Haarfager,
Petty kings all from their kingdoms he hurls,
"Bloody axe" Erik for tyranny banished
After becomes one of England's proud Earls, &c.

"Oh, no; you're ill. It'll be all right. If we can only just manage to fit in, it will be square strax (immediately). You wont be too warm," continued he, pulling a slate over the smoke-hole; "the night is very cold."

So, in the brothers got, merely divesting themselves of their coats and waistcoats, while I had on all the coats in my wardrobe, like some harlequin in his first *début* at a country fair. At first, the squeeze was very like the operation one has so often witnessed in the old coaching days, of wedging any amount of passengers into a seat made to hold four—"Higgledy piggledy, here we lie." Truly, necessity makes us acquainted with strange bedfellows. But by degrees we shook down. When a tea-cup is full to overflowing, there is room for the sugar. However, it was necessary, whenever one of us changed his position, for the others to do the same, like the poor niggers on board the slaver in the Middle passage. The coverlets were of the scantiest; but there did not seem to be any unfair attempt made to steal a skin from one's neighbour when he had gone

to sleep, as the Kansas men are said to be in the habit of doing when bivouacking out.

The others had, if possible, less elbow-room than we three. The two elder were allowed to take the middle places, while the younger ones were pressed against the damp, hard wall. The hut was soon quiet; outside it was frosty, with no wind, and the only noise within was the occasional snoring of one of the party, which was so sonorous, that it made me think of "the drone of a Lincolnshire bagpipe" (see Shakspeare)—though I can't say I ever heard one. At last I fell off. How soundly I slept that night, with the exception of a slight touch of nightmare, in which, by an inverted order of things, I rode the mare instead of the mare riding me; scudding along at one time after the reindeer, over stock and stone with wonderful celerity; at another, dashing in snow-shoes after the otters, or whirling among the moors, in the midst of an odd set of elfin coursers and riders.

CHAPTER IX.

The way to cure a cold—Author shoots some dotterel—Pit-fall for reindeer—How mountains look in mountain air—A natural terrace—The meeting of the waters—A phantom of delight—Proves to be a clever dairymaid—A singular cavalcade—Terrific descent into Tjelmö-dal—A volley of questions—Crossing a cataract—A tale of a tub—Author reaches Garatun—Futile attempt to drive a bargain.

THE grey light of the morning was peeping through the hole in the roof, when I was awoke by Nicholas bestirring himself, and kicking his way through the conglomerate of prostrate forms. Thank goodness, my feverish chill had left me. "Richard was himself again!" The superfluity of vestments, together with the animal heat generated by seven human beings, packed as we had been, had done the business. The black wall I found trickling with moisture, like the sides of a Russian bath, from the hot smoke and steam, condensed by the

colder stones. I felt no return of the complaint, and doubtless the sovereign nostrum for me, under the circumstances, was the one I accidentally took.

After a cup of coffee, some cold trout and biscuit, I was ready to start; before doing which I put a trifle in Nicholas' hand, which he pronounced a great deal too much. As we trudged along, a solitary raven or two were not wanting to the landscape; while, contrasting with their funereal plumage and dismal croak, was the cheerful twittering white-rumped stone-chat (steen-ducker), bobbing about from stone to stone, seemingly determined to enjoy himself in spite of the Robinson Crusoe nature of his haunts. Presently I let fly at a large flock of dotterel—"Rundfugel," as the guide called them—and made a handsome addition to the proviant.

In one spot, where the available space for walking was narrowed by the head of a lake on one side, and an abrupt hill on the other, we came upon what looked like a saw-pit, four feet long and two feet broad but which had been filled up with large stones. This, I was informed, was once a pit-fall

for the reindeer, but now discontinued. It was judiciously placed in a defile which the deer were known to make for when disturbed.

Not far beyond, as I passed what looked like a grey stone, the guide said—"That is Viensla Bue." In fact, it was a small den, four feet high, constructed by some reindeer-hunter. I peeped in, and saw an iron pot and bed of moss, which show that it is still at times visited by man.

"Yonder is Harteigen," exclaimed Ole, pointing to a singular square-shaped mountain, to the left, with precipitous sides, which looked two or three miles off, but which was in reality a dozen; such is the clearness of this atmosphere. Indeed, at home, every object appears to me to have a fuzzy, indistinct outline, when compared with the intensely sharp, definite outline of everything here.

"That mountain to our right, is Granatknuten," continued my guide, "and this is Soveringsrindan."

At least such was the name, as far as I could decipher his strange pronunciation, of the curious terraced elevation on which our path now lay.

It looked like a regular embankment, which it was difficult to imagine was not the work of men's hands. In height, this terrace varied from thirty to eighty feet; its crown, which was perfectly even, and composed of shingle, mossed over in places, was about twenty feet broad, and afforded excellent walking; while in length it was about two English miles, and formed a gentle curve, cut in two about midway by a stream flowing from the Granat-knuten to our right. On either side of the terrace were narrow moat-like lakes; while, to complete the illusion of its being a work of defence, at the distance of a few hundred yards to the right below the mountain, stood a mass of what seemed the irregular fortifications of an old castle.

Leaving the terrace, we presently walked along the bed of an ancient torrent, the peculiarity of which was that the stones which formed it fitted so exactly that they looked as if they had been laid by the hand of a mason. Before long we joined company with a stream going the same way as ourselves, so that we have now passed the water-shed. Hitherto the waters we have seen find their outlet

in the River Lougen, which flows down past Kongsberg to Laurvig, at the mouth of the Christiania-Fjord. Henceforward all the converging streams descend into the Hardanger-Fjord.

After a rough descent, we reach the first saeter, where Ole stops to talk with a damsel, Gunvor by name. Her dark hair, being drawn tightly back, so as to leave a thorough view of her well-cut face, eventuated in two tails, neatly braided with red tape.

A sleeveless jacket of red cloth fitted tightly to her figure, reminding me of the Tyrolese bodice, while her arms were covered with voluminous coarse linen shirt-sleeves, of spotless white, and buttoned at the wrist, while the collar was fastened at the throat to large silver studs. Across her bosom, in the fork of the bodice, was an inner patch of black cloth, garnished with beads. Gunvor smiled with an air of conscious pride as she bid us enter into her saeter, which, like herself, was extremely neat, contrasting favourably with the slovenly appearance of things in Thelemarken, which I had left behind me.

Around were ranged well-scoured vessels, full of all the mysterious products of the mountain dairy; were I to recount the names of which, the reader, who knows practically of nothing beyond milk and cream, and cheese and butter, would be astonished that so many things, of which he never heard, could be prepared out of simple cow's and goat's milk. The only thing that did not quite square with my notions of the idyllic modesty and simplicity of the scene was the sight of a youth, who had come up from the Hardanger, and was a servant of the farmer to whom the saeter belonged, stretched out asleep on Gunvor's bed.

Refreshed with a lump of reindeer flesh out of my wallet, together with thick milk and brandy, we followed the path in its circuit round some more *rochers montonnées*, where the action of former glaciers is visible to perfection in the smoothed inclines and erratic blocks now standing stockstill. After many a toilsome up and down, we at length get the first bird's-eye view of a darksome piece of water, lying thousands of feet below us in a deep trough of gigantic precipices. My destination is

the farm-house of Garatun (tun = town, the original meaning of which was enclosure); but to my utter astonishment I find that we have still fourteen miles of toil between us and the haven of rest.

Before long we overtake a singular cavalcade, which afforded an insight into Norwegian peasant life. There were four light little horses, each loaded with what looked like a pair of enormous milk pails. These are called strumpe, and are full of whey or thick milk, or some product of the mountain dairy. Two men followed the horses, each with a sort of Alpen-stock, only that at the end, grasped by the hand, there stuck out a stump of a branch. This I found is not only used as a walking staff, but is also most useful in another way. Each of the pails has of course to be hung on the straddle separately, and unless there is a second man to hold up the pail, already slung, till the other is also adjusted, the straddle would turn round under the horse's belly, and the pail upset. This crutched stick, therefore, is used to prop up one side until the counterpoising pail is suspended on the other side the horse. Besides the men, there was a young girl,

with her fair hair braided with red tape, her bodice of green cloth, while the stomacher or "bringe-klut" was of red cloth, studded as usual with strings of coloured beads. A little boy was also of the party, dressed in the costume of the men, the only characteristic feature of which was a pair of red garters, tied *over* the trousers below the knee, for the purpose I heard of keeping them out of the dirt.

The descent into Tjelmö-dal was terrific. My horse was lightly loaded; but the others were weighted, as I thought, beyond their powers, and the liquid within was alive, and swayed about, and was therefore more burdensome than dead weight proper. But, as usual, the horses were left to pick their own way, which was in places steeper than the ascent of St. Paul's, the only assistance given them being a drag on the crupper from behind. The crupper, be it said, was not such as one generally sees, but a pole, about two feet long, curved in the middle for the tail to fit into, with either end fastened by wicker straps to the corresponding pail. This pristine contrivance, which

has no doubt been in use for centuries, keeps the weight comparatively steady, and eases the horse.

"Who are you? Where do you come from? Are you an Englishman? Are you a landscape painter?" was a part of the volley of questions which they forthwith discharged at the writer of these lines, as he joined the party at the side of a thundering torrent of some breadth and depth—too deep to ford—where the little boy and girl, I observed, were jumping upon the nags.

"May I mount on that horse?" was the short interrogatory with which I answered them, having an eye to the main chance, and thinking that my tired horse, who was moreover far behind, had little chance of getting safely over with me on his back.

"Be so good! be so good! (vær so godt!)" was the good-natured reply, and I was in a moment astride of the animal, after the fashion for riding donkeys bareback in England, *i.e.*, more aft than forward; and, after a few plunges among the stones, we were safe over the cataract. The two men, by the aid of their poles, crossed just above, leaping

from one slippery stone to another, at the risk of flopping into the deep gurgling rapids that rushed between them.

We had scarcely got through when a terrible commotion was raised in front, and a simultaneous burst of "burra burraing" (wohoa-ing) ensued from all the party. In turning an angle of the corkscrew descent one of the pails had caught a projecting rock, and become unhooked, and was rolling away, the horse very nearly doing the same thing, right over the precipice. To stop its course, lift it up, and hook it on the straddle, was a task speedily accomplished by these agile mountaineers.

The fright having subsided, off we started again, and the queries re-commenced. A Norwegian is a stubborn fellow, and sticks to his point. Little was to be got out of me but parrying answers, and the peasants guessed me of all the countries of Europe, ultimately fixing on Denmark as my probable native country.

After twisting and turning and passing one or two waterfalls of considerable height, we at length reached the bottom of the chasm, in which

the river, which I had left some hours before, had forced its almost subterranean passage from the Fjeld. The gigantic wall of limestone on the opposite side rose, I should say at a rough guess, five times as high as the cliff impending over the Giant's Causeway, and in more than one spot a force tumbled over the battlements.

By nine o'clock, P.M., to my great relief, as I was miserably foot-sore, my boots not having been properly greased, we arrived at Garatun, one of half a dozen small farmsteads that lay on the small grassy slopes by the side of the dark Eidsfjord. An old crone showed me upstairs into a room, round which were ranged eight chests or boxes with arching tops, painted in gaudy colours, with the name of Niels Garatun and his wife inscribed thereon. Round the wooden walls I counted twenty cloth dresses of red, green, and blue, suspended from wooden pegs. No beer being procurable, I slaked my raging thirst, while coffee was preparing, with copious draughts of prim, a sort of whey.

Before long, two or three peasants stalked in,

hands in pockets, and forthwith, according to custom, commenced squirting tobacco-juice from their mouths with all the assiduity of Yankees.

"Who are you? Are you going up to the Foss to-morrow? Will you have a horse and a man? Many gentlemen give one dollar for the horse and one for the man. It's meget brat (very steep); Slem Vei (bad road)."

To all which observations I replied that I was very tired, and could answer no questions at all that night. Upon which the spitters retired with an air of misgiving about me, as they had evidently calculated on nailing the foreigner to a bargain at the first blush of the thing; and, when the news of my arrival got wind, their market was sure to be lowered by competition. One of them, after closing the door, popped his head in again, and said—

"He thought he could do it cheaper; but I had better say at once, else he should be up to the saeter in the morning before I got up."

"I would say nothing till nine o'clock the next morning," was my reply, and I was left to rest

undisturbed; the men apparently thinking me an odd individual.

Long before nine o'clock my slumbers were disturbed by the entrance of a sharp-looking individual, who asked if I would have coffee? He did not belong to the house even; but by this *ruse* it was evident he intended to steal a march on the others.

"For four orts" (three shillings and fourpence), said he, "I'll guide you up to the Foss, and then row you across the lake to Vik on the Hardanger." The bargain was concluded at once; not a little to the consternation of the two dollar men, who, when they presented themselves at 9 o'clock, found that they were forestalled.

CHAPTER X.

The young Prince of Orange—A crazy bridge—At the foot of the mighty Vöring Foss—A horse coming down stairs—Mountain greetings—The smoke-barometer—The Vöring waterfall—National characteristics—Paddy's estimate of the Giant's Causeway—Meteoric water—New illustrations of old slanders—How the Prince of Orange did homage to the glories of nature—Author crosses the lake Eidsfjord—Falls in with an English yacht and Oxonians—An innkeeper's story about the Prince of Orange—Salmonia—General aspect of a Norwegian Fjord—Author arrives at Utne—Finds himself in pleasant quarters—No charge for wax-lights—Christian names in Thelemarken—Female attire—A query for Sir Bulwer Lytton—Physiognomy of the Thelemarken peasants—Roving Englishmen—Christiania newspapers—The Crown Prince—Historical associations of Utne—The obsequies of Sea Kings—Norwegian gipsies.

FROM my guide I learn that this land's-end nook has been lately in a tremendous ferment, in consequence of the young Prince of Orange, who is making a tour in company with the Crown Prince

of Norway, having visited the Vöring Foss. The Prince, whom report destines for England's second Princess, appears to have been very plucky (meget flink) at the outset of the excursion, and outwalked all the rest of the party—at all events they suffered him to think so. Half way up, however, he was dead beat, and compelled to get on pony back.

At first the narrow valley is tolerably level, blocked up, however, with monstrous rocks and stones. Soon we arrive at a crazy bridge spanning the torrent. Striding on to this, Herjus turns round to see what I am doing. Finding me close behind, he goes on. The traveller in Norway must learn at a pinch

> To cross a torrent foaming loud
> On the uncertain footing of a spear.

"Many people get frightened at this bridge," says he, "and we are forced to lead them over."

At this I was not surprised. Three fir trees, of immense length, thrown across the thundering waters from two projecting cliffs, and supported midway by a rock in the stream, formed the permanent way. This, I understood, was very rotten;

there was no sort of hand-railing, and at every step we took the frail timbers swayed unpleasantly with our weight. Passing Möbu, up to which salmon force their way, we recross the stream by a newly constructed, safe bridge, and leave it to thread its passage through cliffs, where no man can follow, to the foot of the mighty Vöring Foss.

We now begin to ascend a precipitous path right in front of us, which here and there assumes the shape of a regular staircase, by means of rough slabs of rock, placed one above another. If I had encountered a laden horse coming down the steps of the Monument, I should not have been more astonished than I was, on meeting upon this staircase a horse, loaded with two great pails. Close behind him was one Knut Tveitö. Grasping tightly at the wooden crupper described in the last chapter (hale-stock = tail-stick), he acted as a powerful drag to break the animal's descent. With reins hanging loosely on his extended neck, ears pricked up, and fore-foot put forward as a feeler into mid-air, the sagacious little beast, with nothing more than his own good sense to guide him, is

groping his way down the loose and steep steps, now and then giving a sort of expostulatory grunt, as the great iron nails in his shoes slip along a rock, or he receives a jolt more shaking than ordinary.*

"Wilkommen fra Stölen" (welcome from the châlet), was the expressive greeting of Herjus to the stranger, whose reply was, "Gesegned arbeid!" (blessed labour). My guide's words first awoke me to the fact that this is the path by which Knut had to toil to the summer pasture of his flocks and herds.

Bidding farewell to Knut, who waited a few minutes while I made a rough sketch of himself and his horse, we went on climbing. Hitherto the height of the mountains around had served to keep out the sun's rays; but now our altitude was such, that they no longer served as a parasol, and as we

* Ordinarily on the high roads these animals are unshod, and yet seem to take no damage from the want of this defence. One is reminded of the text—"Their horses' hoofs shall be counted like flint." The shoe of the mountain horses is usually fastened on with four prodigious nails.

emerged from the shadow into the broiling glare, the labour became proportionately greater. But we soon reach the top of the ascent, and open upon a bleak moor, flagged at intervals with flattish stones.

To the north rose a roundish mountain, clad with snow. This is Iökeln, 5700 feet high, called by the natives Yuklin. Between us and it, at the distance of about a mile across the moor, rose a thin, perpendicular spire of smoke, which might have been taken for the reek of a gipsy camp-fire.

"That's Vöring," said the guide, stuffing a quantity of blue and cloud berries into his mouth. "We shall have good weather; you should see Vöring when the weather is going to be bad—doesn't he smoke then?"

I observed that all the people here talked thus of the Fall, assigning a sort of personality to the monster, as if it was something more than a mere body of water.

"And here we are at Vöring," said the guide, after we had steeple-chased straight across the

swamp to the shadowy spire. As he said this, he pointed down into an abyss, from which proceeded dull-sounding thunderings.

I found we were standing on the verge of a portentous crater, nine hundred feet deep, into which springs, at one desperate bound, the frantic water-spirit. The guide's phlegmatic appearance at this moment was a striking contrast to the excitement of Paddy this summer, when he was showing me the organ-pipes of the Giant's Causeway, sounding with the winds of the Atlantic.

"This, yer honner, is allowed by all thravellers to be the most wonderfullest scane in the whole world. There's nothing to be found like it at all at all. Many professors have told me so."

Straight opposite to us the cliff rose two or three hundred feet higher, and shot down another stream of no mean volume. But it was the contact of the Vöring with the black pit-bottom that I desired to see. This, however, is no easy matter. At length I fixed on what appeared to be the best spot, and requesting the man to gripe my hand tight, I craned over as far as I could,

and got a view of the whole monster at once. Did not he writhe, and dart, and foam, and roar like some hideous projectile blazing across the dark sky at night. Such a sight I shall never behold again. It was truly terrific. It was well that the guide held me fast, for a strange feeling, such as Byron describes, as if of wishing to jump overboard, came over me in spite of myself.

But, after all, the Vöring Foss is a disappointment. You can't see it properly. A capital defect. One adventurous Englishman, I understand, did manage by making a detour, to descend the cliff, and actually launched an India-rubber boat—what odd fellows Englishmen are—on the infernal surge below. A man who was with him told me he held the boat tight by a rope, while the Briton paddled over the pool. Arrived there, without looking at the stupendous column which rose from where he was to the clouds, or rather did *vice versâ*, he pulled out of his pocket a small pot of white paint, and forthwith commenced painting his initials on the rock, to prove, as he said, that he had been there.

This reminds me of one of our countrymen who arrived in his carriage at dead of night at some Italian city of great interest. "Antonio, what is the name of this place?" On hearing it, he puts the name down in his pocket-book, and orders the horses, exclaiming—"Thank goodness; done another place."

The next thing will be that we shall hear of some Beckford blasting the rock, and erecting a summer-house like that at the Falls of the Rhine, for the tourists to peep out of.

Fancy a Dutchman in such a place! The elation of the Prince of Orange, when he got to this spot, was such, that he and the botanist who accompanied him, are recorded to have drunk more wine than was good for them. "Pull off your hat, sir," he hiccuped to the chief guide, in reverence, the reader will suppose, to the spirit of the spot. "Pull off your hat, I say; it is not every day that you guide a Prince to the Vöring!"

It was not till six o'clock that we were down at Garatun; so that the excursion is a good stiff day's work. But to this sort of thing I

had become accustomed, having walked on the two preceding days a distance of more than sixty English miles.

Crossing the gloomy little lake Eidsfjord, in a small boat rowed by my guide, and then over the little isthmus which separates it from the sea, I arrived at the "Merchant's" at Vik. An English yacht, with Oxford men on board, lay at anchor close by. This I boarded forthwith, and was entertained by the hospitable owner with tea and news from England.

Magnus, the innkeeper, is evidently a man making haste to be rich. He has cows in plenty on the mountains; but he takes care to keep them there, and there is, consequently, not a vestige of cream or milk in his establishment, let alone meat, or anything but fladbrod and salted trout. He exultingly tells me that he was the guide-in-chief to the Dutch Prince, and what a lot of dollars he got for it. I don't know whether these people belie his Royal Highness, but here is another anecdote at his expense.

"Magnus," said the Prince, after paying him,

"are you content? Have I paid as much as any Englishman ever did? For if any Englishman ever paid more, tell me, and I'll not be beaten."

As far as I could gather, Magnus, in reply, hummed and hawed in a somewhat dubious manner, and thus managed to extract a dollar or two more from his Highness.

Princes, by-the-bye, seem the order of the day. During the few hours I stopped here, a Prussian Prince and his suite, travelling *incognito*, also arrived, and passed on to the Waterfall.

The stream between this and the fresh-water lake above holds salmon and grilse, but there are no good pools.

On a lovely morning I took boat for Utne, further out in the Hardanger-Fjord. The English yacht had left some hours before, but was lying becalmed, the white sail hanging against the mast, under some tall cliffs flanking the entrance to the small Ulvik-Fjord. One or two stray clouds, moving lazily overhead, threw a dark shadow on the mountains, which are bathed in warm sunshine. Among the dark-green foliage and grey rocks

which skirt the rocky sides of the Fjord for miles in front of us, may at times be descried a bright yellow patch, denoting a few square yards of ripening corn, which some peasant has contrived to conjure out of the wilderness. Near the little patch may be descried a speck betokening the cabin of the said Selkirk.

As you approach nearer, you descry, concealed in a little nook cut out by nature in the solid rock, the skiff in which the lonely wight escapes at times from his isolation. In fact, he ekes out his subsistence by catching herring or mackerel, or any of the numerous finny tribes which frequent these fjords; in some measure making up to the settlers the barrenness of the soil. Presently I hear a distant sound in the tree-tops. Look! the clouds, hitherto so lazy, are on the move; the placid water, which reflected the yacht and its sails so distinctly just now, becomes ruffled and darkens; and anon a strong wind springs forth from its craggy hiding-place. See! it has already reached the craft, and she is dancing out into the offing, lying down to the water in a manner that shows she will soon lessen her eight miles distance from us, and beat

out to sea with very little difficulty. As for poor luckless me, the boatmen had, of course, forgotten to take a sail; so that the wind, which is partly contrary, and soon gets up a good deal of sea, greatly retards our progress.

At length we arrive at Utne, a charming spot lying at the north-western entrance to the Sör-Fjord. What excellent quarters I found here. The mistress, the wife of the merchant, a most tidy-looking lady, wearing the odd-looking cap of the country, crimped and starched with great care, bustled about to make me comfortable. Wine and beer, pancakes and cherries, fresh lamb and whiting—O noctes cœnæque Deum!—such were the delicacies that fell to my share, and which were, of course, all the more appreciated by me after a fortnight's semi-starvation among the mountains, crowned by the stingy fare of the dollar-loving Magnus.*

* The following is the printed tariff of charges at these places. It is fixed by the Voged of the district:

	skill.	d.
" Bed with warm room	24	= 10 English.
„ „ cold room	16	
Contor (*i.e.* large) cup of coffee .	8	

I think I have not mentioned that in Thelemarken and the Hardanger district one meets with quite a different class of Christian names from elsewhere in Norway, where the commonplace Danish names, often taken from Scripture, are usual. Ole, it is true, being the name of the great national saint, is rife all over, especially in Hallingdal; so much so that if you meet with three men from that district, you are sure, they say, to find one of the three rejoicing in that appellation. The female part of the family

	skill.
Small cup of coffee	4
Large cup of tea	6
Small ditto	3
Warm breakfast	20
Warm dinner	24
Bed for single folk	2
Eggedosis (glass of egg-flip) . .	10
Bottle of red wine	48

N. B.—Servants nothing, but if a traveller stops in cold room for half an hour without taking any refreshment, he must pay 4 skill, or if in a warm one, 8 skill." It must be observed that the latter charges are never enforced, and that in some districts a bed is only 12 skill, and a cup of coffee 5 skill.

here rejoice in the names of Torbior, Guro, and Ingiliv.

"I wish, Guro, you would teach me the names of the various articles of female attire you wear," said I to the said damsel, a rosy-cheeked lass, her mouth and eyes, like most of the girls in the country, brimfull of good nature, though, perhaps, not smacking of much refinement. Her hair-tails were, as usual, braided with red tape: and, it being Sunday, these were bound round her head in the most approved modern French fashion.

"Oh! that is called Troie," said she, as I pointed to a close-fitting jacket of blue cloth, which, the weather being chilly, she wore over all; and this is called Overliv—*i.e.*, the vest of green fitting tight to her shape, with the waist in the right place.

What can so good a judge as Sir Bulwer Lytton, by-the-bye, be about when he talks somewhere of a "short waist not being unbecoming, as giving greater sweep to a majestic length of limb."

"And this is the Bringe-klud" (the little bit of cloth placed across the middle of the bosom);

"and this is called Stak," continued she, with a whole giggle, and half a blush.

"And who was that reading aloud below this morning?"

"Oh, that was Torbior" (the mistress of the house).

"And what was she reading?"

"The Bible; she always does that every morning. We all assemble together in that room."

Guro was fair; not so many of the inhabitants of the Hardanger district. The dark physiognomies and black eyes of some of the peasants contrast as forcibly with the blond aspect of the mass, as the Spanish faces in Galway do with the fair complexions of the generality of the daughters of Erin. One wonders how they got them. I never heard any satisfactory solution offered of the phenomenon.

Two Englishmen, who have also found their way hither, are gone to have a sight of the neighbouring Folge Fond. One of them is a Winchester lad, who has been working himself nearly blind and quite ill. His companion is of

a literary turn, and indulges in fits of abstraction. Emerging from one of these, he asks me whether there is ever a full moon in Carnival-time at Rome. Eventually, I discover the reason of his query. He is writing a novel, and his "Pyramus and Thisbe" meet within the Colosseum walls, at that period of rejoicing, by moonlight. But more circumspect than Wilkie, who makes one of the figures in his Waterloo picture eating oysters in June, he is guarding against the possibility of an anachronism.

Among the luxuries of this most tidy establishment are some Christiania papers. The prominent news is the progress of the Crown Prince, who is travelling in these parts. He landed here, and sketched the magnificent mountains that form the portals of the enchanting Sör (South) Fjord. At Ullenswang, on the west shore of that Fjord, he invited all the good ladies and gentlemen, from far and near, to a ball on board his yacht *Vidar*, dancing with the prettiest of them. What particularly pleases the natives is the Prince's free and easy way of going on. He chews tobacco strenuously,

and to one public functionary he offered a quid (skrue), with the observation, "Er de en saadaan karl (Is this in your line)?" At a station in Romsdal, where he slept, he was up long before the aides-de-camp. After smoking a cigar with the Lehnsman in the keen morning air, finding that his attendants were still asleep, he went to their apartment, and, like an Eton lad, pulled all the clothes from their beds.

The great advantage which will ensue from the personal acquaintance thus formed between the Prince and this sturdy section of his subjects, is thoroughly understood, and the Norskmen appreciate the good of it, after their own independent fashion. One or two speakers, however, have greeted him with rather inflated and fulsome speeches, going so far as to liken him to St. Olaf, of pious memory. The only resemblance appears to be, that he is the first royal personage, since the days of that monarch, who has visited these mountains.

Utne has some curious historical recollections. In a hillock near the house several klinkers, such as those used for fastening the planking of vessels,

have been discovered. Here then is a confirmation of the accounts given by Snorr. The ship, which was the Viking's most valuable possession, which had borne him to foreign lands, to booty and to fame, was, at his death, drawn upon land; his body was then placed in it, and both were consumed by fire. Earth was then heaped over the ashes, and the grave encircled by a ship-shaped enclosure of upright stones, a taller stone being placed in the centre to represent the mast.

Sometimes, too, the dying Sea King's obsequies were celebrated in a fashion, around which the halo of romance has been thrown. "King Hake of Sweden cuts and slashes in battle as long as he can stand, then orders his war-ship, loaded with his dead men and their weapons, to be taken out to sea, the tiller shipped, and the sails spread; being left alone, he sets fire to some tar-wood, and lies down contented on the deck. The wind blew off the land, the ship flew, burning in clear flame, out between the islets and into the ocean, and there was the right end of King Hake."*

* Emerson.

Considering that this place is so near such an enormous tract of snow and ice as the Folgefond, it is rather astonishing to find that it will grow cherries, apples, and corn, better than most places around.

I make a point in all these spots of examining any printed notice that I may come across, as being likely to throw light on the country and its institutions. Here, for instance, is a Government ordinance of 1855, about the Fante-folk, otherwise Tatere, or gipsies. From this I learn that some fifteen hundred of these Bedouins are moving about the kingdom, with children, who, like themselves, have never had Christian baptism or Christian instruction. They are herewith invited to settle down, and the Government promises to afford them help for this purpose; otherwise they shall still be called "gipsies," and persecuted in various ways.

CHAPTER XI.

From Fairy lore to Nature lore — Charming idea for stout folk — Action and reaction — Election day at Bergen—A laxstie—A careless pilot—Discourse about opera-glasses—Paulsen Vellavik and the bears—The natural character of bears—Poor Bruin in a dilemma—An intelligent Polar bear—Family plate—What is fame?—A simple Simon—Lime-stone fantasia—The paradise of botanists—Strength and beauty knit together—Mountain hay-making—A garden in the wilderness—Footprints of a celebrated botanist—Crevasses—Dutiful snow streams—Swerre's sok—The Rachels of Eternity—A Cockney's dream of desolation—Curds and whey—The setting in of misfortunes—Author's powder-flask has a cold bath—The shadows of the mountains—The blind leading the blind—On into the night—The old familiar music—Holloa—Welcome intelligence.

From Utne I take boat for a spot called Ose, in a secluded arm of the Fjord. My boatman, an intelligent fellow, tells me that Asbjörnsen, the author of a book of Fairy Tales, is now, like Mr. Kingsley, turned naturalist, and has been dredg-

ing with a skrabe (scraper) about here. He has discovered one small mussel, and a new kind of star-fish, with twelve rays about twelve inches long, body about the size of a crown-piece, and the whole of a bright red. The rays are remarkably brittle. This I afterwards saw in the Museum at Bergen. Asbjörnsen is an exceedingly stout man, and very fat, and the simple country-people have the idea, therefore, that he must be very rich. Wealth and fatness they believe must go together.

The wind, which had all the morning been blowing from the land, as the afternoon advances veers round, like the Bise of the Mediterranean, and thus becomes in our favour. I now see the reason why the men would not start till the afternoon. In fine weather, the wind almost invariably blows from the sea after mid-day, and from the mountain in the morning; and, in illustration of the law that action and reaction are always equal and contrary, the stronger it blows out, the stronger it blows in. Tit for tat.

Erik, who is very communicative, says, "This

is our election day at Bergen for South Bergen-Stift. We don't choose directly; every hundred men elect one; and this College of Voters elects the Storthing's-man. Mr. H——, the clergyman, is one of the sitting members."

"Has every male adult a vote?"

"No. In the country they must have a land-qualification, and pay so much tax to Government; besides which, before they can exercise their franchise, they must swear to the Constitution. People think much more of the privilege than they did formerly. Several have qualified lately. The more voters, the more Storthing's-men, so that the Storthing is increasing in number."

As we scud along, we pass a stage projecting from a rock. This is a Laxstie, or place where salmon are caught, as they swim by, by means of a capstan-net, which is hoisted up suddenly as they pass over it. But I shall have occasion to describe one of these curious contrivances hereafter.

"Very curious fish, those salmon," continued my informant. "They are very fond of light—

like moths for that; always like to take up the Fjord where the cliffs are lowest—at least, so I hear."

The breeze being fresh, we went gaily along; "So hurtig som sex" (as quick as six), said the man, using a saying of the country. Presently, he fastened the sheet, drew a lump of tobacco out of his waistcoat-pocket, and began to chew.

"You must not fasten the sheet," interposed I.

"Why, you are not 'sö-raed' (frightened of the sea)?"

"No; but you Norskmen are very careless. Supposing a Kaste-wind comes from that mountain plump upon us, where are you?"

"Oh, that is never the case in summer."

"Can you swim?" said I.

"No."

"Well, I can; so that in case of accident you have more reason to be alarmed than I. But I have property in the boat, and I shan't run the risk of losing it."

"Ah! you English are very particular. Not long ago I rowed four Englishmen. Directly we got in the bay, although it was beautiful weather, one and all they pulled out a cloth bag with

a screw to it, and blew it up, and put it round their waists."

I could not help smiling at my countrymen's peculiarities. As we swept along under the cliffs, I inquired whether there were any bears about here.

"Bears! forstaae sig (to be sure)! You see that speck yonder? That's Vellavik."

I took out my double glass to discern it—they are infinitely superior to the single ones.

"Bless me! why you have got a skue-spil kikkert* (theatre-glass)!"

"Skue-spil! what do you know about skue-spil?"

"Why, I once was at Bergen, and went to see a play."

"Indeed! And how did you like it?"

"Not much. I also saw a juggler and a rope-dancer: that I liked a vast deal better."

"But about that bear at Vellavik?"

"Oh, yes. Well, Paulsen Vellavik, who lives yonder, was up under the mountain early in the spring. The bears get up there then to eat the young grass, for it springs there first. He was

* From "kige," to spy, still extant in the Scottish word "to keek."

coming down a narrow scaur—you know what I mean? Such a place as that yonder"—pointing to a deep scaur in the side of the mountain. "Suddenly he meets four bears coming towards him, two old, two young. The bears did not wish to meet him, for when they were some distance off, they turned out of the road, and tried to climb up out of the scaur; but it was too steep. So down they came towards him, growling horribly. He immediately stuffed his body, head foremost, into a hole which he saw in the cliff. It was not deep enough to get himself hidden in. His legs stuck out. In another second two of the bears were upon him, biting at his legs. To scream was death. His only chance of preservation was to sham dead. After biting him, and putting him to great pain, which he endured without a sound, the bears paused, and listened attentively. Paulsen could distinctly feel their hot breath, and, indeed, see them from his hiding-place. After thus listening some time, and not hearing him breathe or move, they came to the conclusion that he was dead, and then they left him. Faint with loss of blood, his

legs frightfully bitten, he managed, nevertheless, to crawl home, and is slowly recovering."

"That is a very good bear-story," said I; "have you another?"

"Ah, sir, the bear is a curious creature; he does not become so savage all at once. When they are young, they eat berries and grass; presently they take to killing small cattle—I mean sheep and goats. Later in life they begin killing horses and cows, and when the bear is very old, he attacks men. But they are great cowards sometimes. Ivar Aslaacson met a she-bear and three young ones this summer. She bit his leg; but he drove her off with nothing but a bidsel"—*i.e.*, iron bit and bridle.

The biter bit, as you may say. This seems rather a favourite weapon of attack. Snorro relates how those two ruffians, Arek and Erek, rode off together into the forest, and were found dead, their heads punched in "med hesten-hoved-band"—*i.e.*, with their horses' bits.

"Once," continued my informant, "I and a party of young fellows went up to a saeter on the

mainland, just opposite Utne. It was Sunday, and we were going to have a lark with the saeter girls. They were in great alarm, for they had seen a bear snuffing about. Off we set in pursuit. At last we found him, skulking about, and drove him with our cries down towards the cliffs that look over the Fjord. We saw him just below us, and shouted with all our might, and the dogs barked. This alarmed him, and he seemed to lose his head, for he jumped to a place where there was no getting away from. Down we thundered rocks and stones at him. He looked in doubt what to do. Then he tried to jump upon another rock; but the stone slipped from under him, and rolled down, and he after it, and broke his neck. A famous fat fellow he was.

"A year or two ago, some men were fishing along shore at Skudenaes, when, lo and behold, they saw something white swimming along straight for the land. It was a white bear. One of them landed, and ran for a gun, and shot at the beast as it touched the shore. It put up its paws in a supplicating manner, as if to beg them to be merciful, but a shot or two more killed the animal with-

out it offering any resistance. It is thought that the creature had escaped from some ship coming from Spitzbergen."

After a favourable run, we enter a deep Fjord, and landing at its extremity, march up to a cluster of houses. Here I agree with one Simon, for the sum of three dollars, to convey my effects over the Fjeld to the Sogne Fjord. His daughter Sunniva prepares me some coffee. To ladle out the cream, she places on the board a stumpy silver spoon, the gilding of which is nearly worn off. It was shaped like an Apostle spoon, except that the shaft was very short, and ended in something like the capital of a pillar.

"That's a curious spoon," I observed to Madam, who now appeared on household cares intent.

"Ah! that belonged to my grandfather, Christopher Gaeldnaes. Did you never hear of him?"

"I can't say I ever did."

"Indeed! Why he was a man renowned for wisdom and wealth all over Norway in the Danish days. Our clergyman tells me that this sort of spoon used to be hung round the child's neck at baptism" (Döbe = dipping.)

In the Museum of Northern Antiquities at Copenhagen, a similar one may be seen.

The extent of the household accommodations was not great. There were no sheets; as a make-shift, I suggested a table-cloth, of the existence of which I was aware; and, in place of a towel, the *pis-aller* was a shirt. I rose at three o'clock, A.M., as we had a long journey before us; but Simon was not ready till much later. He was evidently a fumbling sort of fellow; and even when we had started, he had to run back and get something he had forgotten. From my experience in guides, I augured ill of his capabilities. To judge from the map, I thought we ought to accomplish the passage of the Fjeld before dark; but all that could be got out of him on this subject was, he could not say. If we couldn't get over, there was a châlet where we might sleep.

As we trudged up the very narrow valley behind the houses, following the brawling stream, I had leisure to survey the surrounding objects. Right and left were impending mountains of enormous height, while in front of us stood, forbidding our

approach, a wall of rock. Behind lay the placid Fjord, with a view of Folgefond in the distance, just catching the blush of the sunrise. The summits of some of the cliffs were cut into all sorts of fantastic shapes. The stupendous ruins which choked the path and stream, and were of limestone, at once explained the reason of the horrid forms above. The rock, from its nature, is evidently given to breaking away, and when it does so, does not study appearances. My guide, however, has something to say on the subject.

"Yonder, sir, is the priest. Don't you see him? His nose (Probst-snabel) came away some months ago, so that now his face is not so easy to make out. That other rock goes by the name of Störk's stool. Did you ever hear the story? Störk was a strong man, and a daring withal. One day he was up at a Thing (assize) at Kinservik, where the Bishop presided. Enraged at some decision made by his right reverence, Störk struck at him with his axe, but luckily missed him, making a fearful gash in the door-post. Störk immediately fled to Ose, below there. Not long after, the Bishop's

boat was descried rowing into the Fjord, to take vengeance for the act of violence. Störk at once fled up to that rock there, to watch the proceedings. Close by it there is a hole, and he had ready a vast flat stone, for the purpose of drawing it over the mouth, in case the Bishop came in pursuit. Meantime, he had left instructions with his son Tholf (which also means twelve) how to act. Tholf, who was a huge fellow, and nearly as strong as his father, set out in his boat to meet the Bishop, having on board a barrel of beer. As the other boat drew near he rested on his oars, and asked the Bishop's permission to drink his health; and this being given, he took up the barrel and began drinking out of the bung-hole. The size of this fellow rather appalled the Bishop, who discreetly inquired whether Störk had any other such sons. 'He has *Tholf*,' was the crafty answer. When the Bishop, not relishing an encounter with twelve such fellows, turned his boat round, and retreated with all speed."

In spite of my anticipations, I find the path gradually unfolds itself as we advance, worming

in and out of the rocks. More luxuriant shrub-vegetation I never beheld; a perfect Paradise of Sub-alpine plants. There were raspberries, and strawberries, and haeggebaer (bird-cherry), the wood of which is the toughest in Norway; besides many kinds of wild flowers, peeping among the fallen rocks. And then the ferns: there was the delicate oak-leaved fern, and the magnificent "polysticum logkitis," with several others. Growing among these was a plant which appeared to be parsley-fern; specimens of which I stuffed into my book.

"Ay, that's a nasty plant, sir," said my guide. "En hel Maengde (a great lot) of it grows hereabouts. We call it Torboll" (I suppose from the destroying god Thor), or Heste-spraeng (horse-burster). It stops them up at once, and they begin to swell, and the only chance then is a clyster."

The cause of all this luxuriance of vegetation is to be found in the sheltered position of the valley, and the moisture caused by the

> Thousand pretty rills
> That tumble down the rocky hills.

One wonders where so much water comes from; till, lifting up the eye beyond the tall cliffs that lie still in the shadow, the vision lights on a field of glistening snow, which the morning sun has just caught and illumined.

Each step that we ascend the flowers grow perceptibly smaller and smaller, but their tints brighter, while the scenery grows more rugged and sombre, and its proportions vaster—an apt representation of savage strength pillowing beauty on its bosom.

As we climb higher and higher, we pass a waterfall, over which hovers an iris, one of those frequent decorations of Norwegian landscape which a British islander but seldom sees in his be-fogged home. Looking back, and following the stream below with my eye, I perceive two figures approaching the water's edge.

"That's my son and daughter," exclaimed Simon. "They are going to make hay on that slope on the other side," said he, pointing to a little green spot high up the mountain.

If a crop was to be got there it would be one,

methought, such as the Scripture describes, "with which the mower filleth not his hand, nor he that bindeth up the sheaves his bosom." Such little matters indicate the wrestle that mankind here has to make both ends meet; in other words, to get a supply of forage enough to last from September to May.

"But there's no bridge," exclaimed I. "They can't get over."

"Oh, they'll manage."

And sure enough I saw the boy first, and then the girl, take off their shoes, and with a hop, spring, and a jump, light on a stone standing out in the torrent, and then on another; and so over with the agility of mountain goats. One false step—an easy matter when the rocks were so slippery—and they would have endangered limb at any rate, for the lin was deep, and worked up to a dangerous pitch of exasperation by the knock-me-down blows that its own gravity was giving it.

Before we emerge from the vast labyrinth of mountain ruin, one overhanging fragment particularly arrests my attention, for, under its eaves, a

quantity of martens had constructed their mud habitations, and were darting out and athwart the stream and back again with their muscipular booty, with intense industry. The trout abound in the brook that placidly flows through the little green plain beyond; but, with such a host of winged fly-catchers about, I doubt whether they ever get into season. Here, taking advantage of this little oasis of sweet grass, two or three saeters had been constructed, with the cows and sheep around them. The bald rock, up which our path now lay, was of mica-slate, striped with bands of white felspar; cold and grey, it was void of grass. The beautiful ferns we had left nestling among the clefts far behind, but a bit of stone-crop held its own here and there, and the claret-stalked London Pride asserted its dignity with much pertinacity. There was also abundance of a red flower.

> On the bare waterless brow
> Of granite ruin, I found a purple flower,
> A delicate flower, as fair as aught I trow,
> That toys with zephyrs in my lady's bower.

"Ah!" said Simon, as I picked up some spe-

cimens, "it must be nigh thirty years ago that I guided a Thelemarken priest over this Fjeld. He told me the name of that 'grass' you've got there (a Norwegian calls all flowers 'grass') but I don't mind it now. He had a large box with him, and filled it full of grass and mosses. He was very particular about that black moss under the snow. His name was—let me see—"

"Sommerfeldt," suggested I, the well-known author of the *Supplementum Floræ Laponicæ*.

"That's it!" exclaimed Simon; "quite right."

The inclined plane, up which we strode, was clearly the work of a glacier. But though there was no ice now, there were crevasses notwithstanding. The mountain was traversed with deep parallel fissures, from a few inches to two or three feet in width. There might have been a score of them—the widest spanned by little bridges of stone, thrown across by the peasants for precaution's sake.

"Dangerous paths these on a dark night," observed I.

"Yes, and in broad daylight too," was the response.

"Mind how you go—it's very slape. Do you see that mark?" continued he, pointing to a long scrawl on the slippery surface, which terminated on the edge of one of these yawning chasms. "The best horse in the valley made that. He slipped in there, and was lost. Nabo (neighbour) Ole's ox did the same thing in another place. Forfaerdelig Spraekke (frightful crack)! Pray take care; let me go first. It will be very bad going, I see, to-day. The snow is so much melted this summer," said he, as we scrambled down into a deep basin, the bottom of which was occupied by grim Stygian pools of snow-slush and spungy ice. We were no sooner out of this slough of despond, than we were on a quasi glacier, with its regularly-marked dirt bands. The snow on which we trod was honeycombed and treacherous. Underneath it might be heard rumbling rills busily engaged in excavating crevasses. Now and then one of them came to the light of day, with that peculiar milky tint of freshly-melted snow, as if the fluid was loth

to give up all at once its parent colour, dutiful child. To add to the strangeness of the scene, the sun, which was now high in heaven, catching the face of the mica-slate, bronzed it into the colour of the armour we have seen worn by the knights at the Christmas pantomime.

"We call that Swerre's Sok," said my guide, pointing to an eminence on my left, reminding me that the brave Norsk king of that name, when pursued by his foes, escaped with the remnants of his army by this appalling route. "He took his sleeping quarters at the saeter we are coming to," continued Simon.

"That's Yuklin," said my cicerone, pointing to a rounded mountain to the right, muffled in "a saintly veil of maiden white," and looking so calm and peaceful amid the storm-tost stone-sea that howled around us. To the left were two lesser snow mountains, Ose Skaveln and Vosse Skaveln, looking down on the scene of confusion at their feet with no less dignity than their sister. Striking images these of tranquil repose and rending passion! It was a magnificent, still, autumn day; if it had

been otherwise, it would be difficult to imagine what features the scene would have assumed. I have seen a good deal of the Fjeld; but, until now, I had no notion how it can look in some places. "Vegetation has ceased now," said the old man, with a kind of shiver, which was quite contagious, as we stumbled among

> Crags, rocks, and mounds, confusedly hurled,
> The fragments of an earlier world.

But a common-place comparison may perhaps bring what I saw home to my readers. Suppose a sudden earthquake, or a succession of them, were to rend, and prostrate, and jumble and tumble all London, choking up the Thames with debris of all imaginable shapes, and converting its bed into deep standing pools, with now and then the toppling tower of a temple or a palace reflecting itself in the waters. And, to crown all, not a single living mortal to be seen about the ruins. If this will not suffice to illustrate the scene, the blame must be laid on my barrenness of invention.

Well, after some miles of this amusement, we came upon a broad, hollow way. To the right of this path was the dark, soft, slaty micaceous schist, but it came no further; and to the left of the line was nothing but white granitic gneiss. A little further on the rock was scorched.

"That's the Torden," said Simon; "a man was struck by lightning here not so long ago."

At last we emerged on a sort of stony moor, and after eight hours' walk suddenly got upon a small plot of grass, and stopped at a châlet. I was not sorry to preface an attack on my own stores by a slight foray among the milky produce of the Fjeld dairy. The curds ("Dravle" or "gum") proved excellent.

This spot was called Hallingskie, and was forty-two English miles from the first farm in Hallingdal. Hitherto, on the whole, we had got on pretty successfully, though at a rather tortoise pace. It was now that our misfortunes began. In the first place, it was too late to think of achieving the passage of the Fjeld by daylight. So we were to sleep at a certain distant châlet; notwithstanding which Simon

seemed in no hurry to move; and it was only when I started off alone that he bestirred himself, jabbering as fast as possible to the old man and woman who lived on this lonely spot. Presently we missed our way, or rather direction—for there was no way whatsoever—and lost much time in hitting off the scent again. If we kept to the right, we got among snow; if too much to the left, the valley was effectually stopped up by inky lakes, laving the bases of perpendicular cliffs. A shot or two at ptarmigan somewhat enlivened the horrors of the scene.

At last, after many ups and downs and roundabouts, we descend into a valley, and cross over a deepish stream, both of us sitting on the horse. Once on the further bank, I, of course, relieved the horse of my weight. Not so my precious Norskman. The unfortunate nag, pressed down by his bulk, sunk at once almost to his hocks in the morass, and only by a prodigious effort extricated himself, to flounder back into the stream. Before I was aware of it, to my consternation, I saw the poor creature was getting into deep water, and then swimming, only his mouth out of water, with all my baggage,

coat, gun, &c., submerged. The wretched Simon, who had never had the adroitness to throw himself from the poor beast's back, sat firmly upon him, just like the Old Man of the sea on the back of Sinbad the sailor—a proper incubus. Of course they'll both be drowned, thought I; but no! the poor beast has secured a footing on the further side of the water, and gradually emerges, all my traps dripping gallons of water. My maps, and powder, and gun, too, terrible thought! So much for the pleasures of travelling in Norway.

Presently, the quadruped recrossed at the ford above. After scolding the man most resolutely for his carelessness, and adjusting the pack, which had got under the horse's belly, I proceeded. On we trudged, I sulky beyond measure, and weary to boot, but consoling myself with the thought of being speedily at the châlet, where I might rest for the night, and dry my effects. The shadows of the mountains beginning to lengthen apace over the dreary lake which we were now skirting, warned me that the day was far spent. But still no symptoms of a habitation. The way seemed

interminable. At last, halting, I Old-Baileyed the guide.

"How far have we to go?"

"Not so very far."

"But night is coming on."

"Oh, we shall get there in å liden Stund (a little while.)"

"Hvor er Stölen (where is the châlet)?"

"It ought to be near."

"Ought to be! what do you mean? Haven't you been this road before?"

"No. But the stöl is near the second great lake, and the second lake can't be far. We've passed the first."

After this agreeable revelation I was wound up into a towering state of ire, which made it prudent not to say more.

Picking my way with difficulty through brooks, and holes, and rocks, on I stumped. Twilight at last became no-light, as we emerged on the side of what seemed to be a lake. Here the châlet ought to be. But whether or no, it was too dark to see. Halting, the guide exclaimed—

"What are we to do?"

"Do? why sleep under a rock, to be sure. Take the load off the horse, and turn him loose. But stop. Is not that the stöl?" exclaimed I, advancing to a dark object, a few yards from us, when I plunged up to my knees in a peat-hag, from which I with difficulty extricated myself. Hitherto my feet had been dry, but they were so no longer.

"Hold your tongue!" I thundered out to the guide, who kept chattering most vociferously, and assuring me that the stöl ought to be here.

"Listen! is not that a bell, on the side of the hill?" We listened accordingly. Sure enough it was the sound of a bell on the side of the mountain, mingling with the never-ceasing hum of the distant waterfalls. It must be some cattle grazing, and the saeter could not be far off. "Try if you can't make your way up in the direction of the sound. The building must be there."

During the half-hour that my Sancho was absent, I tramped disconsolately, like "the knight of the sorrowful figure," up and down a little square of

ground by the horse, to keep myself warm, as, besides being wet, I sensibly felt the cold of the perpetual snow which lay not far off. In due time Simon returned. The solitary bell was that of a horse, who was feeding on the slope, but no saeter could he find.

"Can you holloa?" I exclaimed; "let's holloa both together."

"I can't, sir," croaked he; "I have no voice." And now I perceived what I had before scarcely noticed, that his voice did not rise above the compass of a cracked tea-kettle. So, as a last resource, I commenced a stentorian solo—"Wi har tabt Veien; hvor er Stölen,"—(We have lost our way. Where is the stöl?)—till the rocks rebellowed to the sound. Suddenly I hear in the distance a sound as of many cattle-bells violently rung, and then, as suddenly, all the noise ceased.

"Strange that. Did you not hear it?" I asked.

"Surely they were cattle."

My guide's superstitions, I fancy, began to be worked on, and he said nothing. Neither did any response come to my louder inquiries, except that

of the echoes. There was nothing for it, then, but to unload the horse, and take up a position under the lee of some stone. The night was frosty, and my pea-coat was wet through, with immersion in the river. Nevertheless, I put it on, and over all, the horse-rug, regular cold water-cure fashion. Then, munching some of the contents of my wallet, and drinking my last glass of brandy, I lit a pipe. Before long, a bright star rose above the mountain, and out twinkled, by degrees, several other stars.

"The moon," my man said, "must soon follow;" but before her cold light was shed across the valley, I had dozed off. At four o'clock I was awoke by Simon, begging me to rise, which I felt very loth to do. Awakened by the cold, he had got up, and by the grey dawn had discovered the saeter, not many hundred yards distant.

"My good Englishman, do get up, and dry yourself," he added, "they've lit a fire."

CHAPTER XII.

The lonely châlet—The spirit of the hills—Bauta stones—Battle-fields older than history—Sand falls—Thorsten Fretum's hospitality—Norwegian roads—The good wife—Author executes strict justice—Urland—Crown Prince buys a red nightcap—A melancholy spectacle—The trick of royalty—Author receives a visit from the Lehnsman—Skiff voyage to Leirdalsören—Limestone cliffs—Becalmed—A peasant lord of the forest—Inexplicable natural phenomena—National education—A real postboy—A disciple for Braham—The Hemsedal's fjeld—The land of desolation—A passing belle—The change house of Björberg—"With twenty ballads stuck upon the wall"—A story about hill folk—Sivardson's joke—Little trolls—The way to cast out wicked fairies—The people in the valley—Pastor Engelstrup—Economy of a Norwegian change-house—The Halling dance—Tame reindeer—A region of horrors.

Bobbing my head low, I entered the châlet. One side of the small interior was occupied by a bed, on which lay a woman with an infant in her arms, while at the other end of the couch—heads and

tails fashion—were a little boy and girl. The other side of the den was occupied by shelves covered with cheeses and vessels of milk, while near the door was the hearth, on which some dried juniper and willow bushes were crackling, under the superintendence of the stalwart Hans, who had left his helpmate's side. Of course the good folks bid me welcome, and bewailed my mischance; and I felt as secure here, though quite alone, and not a soul in England knew where I was, as if I had been in my native country.

Taking a seat on the end of a box, which I turned up for the purpose—the only seat in the place—I commenced warming my outer man with the blaze and smoke of the cabin, and my inner with a kettle of hot tea. How fortunate it was that I thought of taking a stock of it with me.

"Did not you hear me cry out, last night?" asked I, when I had thawed a little.

"We heard a noise outside, and peeped out. All the cattle sprang to their feet in great alarm; so we thought it might be some wild animal. Afterwards, we heard the sound repeated, and did not

know what to make of it. I didn't like to venture out."

"You thought it was a troll, no doubt," suggested I, but did not press him on this point.

Reader, if you lived the life of these people, I'll venture to say that, were you as matter-of-fact a body as ever lived, you would become infected with a tinge of superstition in spite of yourself.

Presently Hans and his wife got up to milk the cows, and we resumed our journey. There were trout of three pound weight, I learned, in the dark lake close by, but I had had quite enough of mountain sojourn for the present. The next two or three hours' travel presented the same scenes as before, savage in the extreme. Now snow, now ice, now rocks splintered, riven asunder, cast upon heaps, and ranged in fantastic groups, with now and then a delicate anemone, red or white, and other Alpine plants peeping modestly out of the ruins.

At last, emerging on a grassy slope, we saw, five or six miles below us, the arm of the Sogne Fjord, whither we were journeying. What a pleasure it was to tread once more on a piece of flat road,

which we did at a place called Flom. More than one Bauta stone erected to commemorate some event, about which nobody knows anything at all, is to be found here. Not long ago they were very numerous; but these relics of a heathen race have been gradually destroyed by the bonders. Offensive and defensive armour is not unfrequently picked up in the neighbourhood, so that this secluded valley must have been at one time the scene of great events.

Over the stream to the left, I see one of those sand-falls so frequent in this country, and more destructive to property than the snow avalanche.* In an unlucky hour some sudden rain-storm washes off the outer skin—*i.e.*, grass, or herbage, of a steep hill of loam or sand. From that hour the sides of the hill keep perishing—nothing will grow upon them, and every rain the earthy particles keep crumbling off from the slope: thus, not only curtailing the available land above, but damaging

* To life also sometimes. Thus, King Ormud was overwhelmed, Snorro tells us, by a rush of stones and mud caused by rain after snow.

the crops below. Woe to the farmer who has a mud or sand-fall of this description on his property.

Not sorry was I to darken the doors of Thorsten Fretum, whose house stood on an eminence, commanding a view up the valley and the Fjord. Bayersk Oel and Finkel—old and good—raw ham, eggs, and gammel Ost—a banquet fit for the gods—were set before me. Thorsten Fretum is a man of substance, and of intelligence to boot. He has twice been member of parliament—one of the twenty peasant representatives out of the aggregate one hundred and four which compose the Storthing. A person of enlightened views, he is especially solicitous about the improvement of the means of road-communication. At present, between the capital, Christiania, and Bergen there are no less than sixty miles of boating; fancy there being sixty miles of sea voyage, and no other means of transit between London and Aberdeen.

Mr. Fretum is well acquainted with the mountains, and from him I learn that my guide has brought me some twenty miles out of the right way.

Mrs. Fretum, a nice-looking woman, wears the regular peasant cap of white linen stiffly starched, but of lighter make than those used in the Hardanger, while round the forehead is fastened a dark silk riband. She is the mother of fourteen sons, some of whose small white heads I could see now and then protruded through a distant door to get a sight of the stranger.

Mr. Fretum catches large salmon in the river, and exhibits flies of his own construction. A few of mine will serve him as improved patterns, and at the same time be an acknowledgment of his hospitality.

The lyster, I find, is used, but as the river is not of a nature to admit of boats, the weapon is secured by a string to the wrist of the caster. I must not omit to say that I deliberately fined my guide one dollar for the injury I had sustained by his carelessness, which he submitted to with a tolerably good grace, evidently thinking I had let him off very cheaply.

An old man and a young girl row me in the evening to that most pretty spot, Urland. Here I

find shelter at the merchant's, just close to the whitewashed church, which, according to tradition, was originally a depôt for merchandize, and belonged to the Hanse League. As I landed, a crowd of peasants stood on the beach taking farewell of a lot of drovers bound for the south. They wore, instead of the national red cap, one of blue worsted, adorned with two parallel white lines. This is peculiar to parts of the Sogne district. The Crown Prince, by-the-bye, enchanted the peasants by purchasing one of the aforesaid red nightcaps to take to Stockholm.

Didn't I get up a good fire in the iron stove which garnished one corner of the comfortable room up-stairs. With a palpitating heart I then opened my box to investigate the amount of damage done by the immersion. What a sight! Those carefully starched white shirts and collars which I had expressly reserved for the period when I should get back to towns and cities, limper than the flexible binding of the guide-book. The books, too, and maps humid throughout; the ammunition nearly in the same plight; while those captain-

biscuits, on which I counted, were converted into what I should imagine was very like baby-food, though I am not skilled in those matters.

There was no need of the cup of cold water, which travelling Englishmen so often insist on placing near the red-hot thirty-six pounders (*i.e.*, iron German stoves) for the purpose of neutralising the dryness of the atmosphere in the apartment, for I was soon in a cloud of steam rising from the drying effects.

The *Morgen-Bladt*, I see, still continues to give accounts of the Crown Prince's progress. He has been examining some extensive draining operations near Molde, much to the wonderment of the peasants.

"I trow the king's son knows as much about these things as the best farmer among us," said a red-capped bonder to another in the crowd.

"Ay, and a vast deal more, let me tell thee, neighbour Ole." And then a strapping youth exclaims,

"How sorry I am that I've served out my time under the king (*i.e.*, as a soldier); I finished last

year. It must be sheer holiday work to serve under such a bonny lad as that."

The Viceroy continually indulges in harmless pleasantries with the good folks, without any loss of dignity by thus unbending. Can any one tell me why things are so different in England? When Shakspeare said "that a sort of divinity hedges a king," he did not mean to say that royalty should be iced. I remember many years ago being at a public masked ball at a continental capital when the King, who was good humouredly sauntering all among the maskers, came up and asked me what character my dress represented, and then made some witty *apropos* as he passed on through the crowd.

The usual explanation given for the sharper distinction of ranks in Great Britain is the vulgarity and want of *savoir faire* of the less elevated classes, who, if they get an inch, will take an ell. If this is true, it is a great blot on the Anglo-Saxon, or whatever you call it, character, that an Englishman cannot take some middle place between flunkeyism and forwardness, sycophancy and rudeness.

During the evening I am favoured with a visit from the Lehnsman, who informs me that the stream close by is rented by an Englishman, who never comes, although it holds good salmon. I also learn, that by a very wise regulation, which might be imitated with good effect in England, he has to report annually to the chief government officer of the district (1), upon the amount of grain sown; (2), the prospects of the harvest; (3), on the result of the harvest. This enables the authorities and merchants to regulate their measures accordingly, and neither more nor less grain is imported than is necessary.

Mons and Illing were the names of the two clever boatmen who manned our skiff the next day to Leirdalsören, distant nearly forty miles. Rounding a vast cliff, whose sides were so steep as not to afford a particle of foothold in case of need, the bark bounds merrily along before a regular gale, and we lose sight very soon of the peaceful Urland, and descry another little green spot, Underdal, with its black chapel of ease to the mother church. Lower down on the same side we open

the entrance to Neri Fjord, guarded by stupendous limestone bluffs; one of these is black with the exposure of many thousand years, and nearly perpendicular. But the most picturesque is the western portal, where in parts the white rock has become turned into a beautiful purple, diversified here and there by patches of green foliage.

I should not have liked to be here on a sunshiny day, just after dame Nature had completed the operation of opening the white limestone. A pair of green spectacles would have been much needed to take off the edge of the glare. That street in Marseilles (see *Little Dorrit*), the minute description of the glare and heat of which reminds one of the tautological pie-man, "all hot, hot—hot again!" must have been nothing to it.

Many eagles have made these fastnesses their dwelling-places, and I hear from the boatmen they commit frequent ravages among the sheep and goats.

Of aquatic birds, red-throated divers are the only ones we see. Indeed, in this part of Norway, the traveller misses the feathered multitudes that are to be seen within the Arctic circle.

But the wind has suddenly failed us, and the five hours, in which we were to accomplish the distance, will infallibly expand into ten; for to our left lies Simla Naze, which is only half way; and the sun resting on its arid peak tells us it is already five o'clock, P.M., although we started before mid-day. Hence we see far down the Fjord to seaward. Yonder is Fresvik, the snow lying on the mountain above illuminated in a wonderful manner by the shooting rays of the sun, which is itself hidden behind a mist-robe. Further seaward, at least a dozen miles from here, may be plainly seen the yellow corn-fields about Systrand, near which is Sognedal, famous for its large Bauta stones.

We now veer round sharp to the eastward, and enter another arm of the immense Fjord. To our right lies the farm-house of Froningen, and behind it a large pine-forest—a rare sight about here—where the timber has been ruthlessly exterminated by the improvident peasants. This forest, consequently, which is seven English miles square, and the property of a single peasant, is of great

value. Our mast, which has hitherto been kept standing, in the vain hope of the breeze revisiting us at this point, is now unshipped; and I unship that most astonishing contrivance, the rudder, with its tiller a yard and a-half long. It was with such an instrument that King Olaf split open the skull of the son of Hacon Jarl.

As we approach Leirdal, the boat takes the ground a good distance from the landing-place. The detritus brought down from the Fille-Fjeld by the rapid Leirdal river, is gradually usurping the place of what was, some years ago, deep water. And yet, notwithstanding the shallowness and the great mass of fresh water coming in, there is less ice here in winter than at Urland, where the water is immensely deep, and much more salt. Indeed, the natural phenomena of this country are frequently inexplicable.

The throng of great, ill-fed looking peasants, who crowded the humble pier of piles, eager for a job, told tales of a numerous population with little to do. Although it was already night in this dark defile, jammed in between overshadowing moun-

tains, I forthwith order a carriole, and drive up the road.

"Do you go to school?" I asked of my boy-attendant.

"Yes," replied Lars Anders. "We must all go for six years, from eight to fourteen; that is to say, for the six winter months, from Martinmas to Sanct Johann's Tid (Midsummer.) After that, we go to the clergyman's for six months, to receive religious instruction."

At Midlysne, where I spent the night, some hermetically sealed provision boxes indicate a visit from Englishmen, who have been catching salmon here. But the increased rate of charges would of itself have suggested something of the kind.

A boy met us on the road next morning with three fine salmon on his back. He had caught them in a deep hole, near Seltum Bridge, and offers them for sale at twopence a pound. The salmon go up as far as Sterne Bridge, and are then stopped by a defile, where the torrent is choked up by masses of fallen rock.

From Husum station my attendant is a very small boy, who with difficulty manages to clamber up on his seat behind. As we commence the ascent of the remarkable road which surmounts the tremendous pass beyond, a deep bass voice sounds close to my ear, startling me not a little. I'll tell you what, reader, you would have started too, if a voice like that had sounded in your ears on such a spot, with no person apparently near, or in sight, that could be the owner of it. Could it come from that tiny urchin? Yet such was the case. Halvor Halvorsen was sixteen years of age, although no bigger than a boy of eight. The cause of his emitting those hollow tones was, that he wished to descend from his perch and walk up the pass, which he cannot do unless the vehicle is stopped; as if such a shrimp as that would make any possible difference to the horse. I suppose he has heard that the last ounce will break the camel's back. His nickname is Wetle, the sobriquet of all misbegotten imps in this country. He cannot spell, and is nearly daft, poor child; but for voice, commend me to him. The whip he

carries is nearly as long as himself; while his dress is exactly of the fashion worn by adults.

Further on the road branches in two directions; that to the left goes over the Fille-Fjeld. We take that to the right, and mount the Hemsedal's Fjeld, and are soon on the summit. Some miserable-looking châlets dot the waste. One of these, Breitestöl, professes to give refreshment; but I did not venture within its forbidding precincts. The juniper scrub has in many places been caught by the frost, studding the wilderness of grey rock, and yellow reindeer moss, with odd-looking patches of russet. A series of sleet showers, which the wind is driving in the same direction as I am going, ever and anon spit spitefully at me. High posts at intervals indicate the presence here, for many months in the year, of deep, deep snow, when everything is under one uniform white, wedding-cake covering; funeral crust, I should rather say, to the unfortunate traveller, who chances to wander from the road, and gets submerged. Everything looks dreary in the extreme; the very brooks seem no longer to laugh joyously

as they come tumbling down from the heights. There is a dull hoarse murmur about them to-day, whether it is the state of the atmosphere, or the state of the wind, or the state of my own spirit at the moment, I know not; perhaps they are loth to leave the parental tarns for the lowlands. The bosom of mamma yonder is also ruffled, I see, into uneasy motion. The writer of *Undine* ought to have been here to embody the imaginings suggested by the scene.

I was all alone, my attendant having gone back with another traveller. Presently, I meet a solitary peasant girl, sitting in masculine fashion on a white pony. The stirrups are too long, so she has inserted her toes in the leathers. It struck me that the lines in the nursery rhyme—

> This is the way the ladies ride,
> This is the way the gentlemen ride,

will have to be inverted for the benefit of Norsk babies. The damsel stares at me with much astonishment, and I stare at her, and, as we pass each other, a "good morning" is exchanged. And

now the water-shed is passed, as I reach an old barrow, which appears to have been opened; and I dart down hill in company with a swiftly coursing stream, the beginning of the Hemsedal River.

Yonder to the left, auspicious sight, stands the changé house of Björberg. I am soon in the Stuë, eating mountain trout, and regaling myself with Bayersk Öl, and then coffee. The biting cold, although August was not yet over, sharpened my appetite. The waiters, who alternately bustled in and out of the room, were a thickset burly man, wearing a portentously large knife, with a weather-beaten, "old red sandstone" sort of countenance; and a female, dressed in the hideous fashion of the country, her waist under her armholes; a fashion none the less hideous from her being in an interesting condition. These two were the landlord, Knut Erickson Björberg, and his spouse, Bergita.

Warmed by the repast, I have leisure to survey the apartment. There were the usual amount of carved wooden spoons, painted bowls and boxes, but the prints upon the log-walls were what chiefly

engaged my attention. One of these was "The Bible map of the way to Life and Death." A youth, in blue coat and red stockings, is beheld on the one side, bearing a cross. After a series of most grotesque adventures, he arrives at heaven's gate, and is admitted by angels, who crown him with a chaplet. On the other side of the picture is a sort of "Rake's Progress." A man is seen dancing with a lady in a flame-coloured dress. Garlands, drinking, and fighting, are the order of the day. At last a person in black, with red toes and red horns, appears. There is a door into a lion's mouth, and, amid flames burning, evil spirits are descried. In another picture the "Marriage of Cana," is described not less graphically, and with equal attention to costume. The *bizarre*—an educated person would pronounce it profane—treatment, one would think, must sadly mar the good moral of the story. Knut was a most intelligent fellow, as I detected at a glance, and so I prevailed upon him to schuss me to the next station, Tuf, instead of sending a stupid lad.

"This is a strange wild country you live in,

Knut," said I, when we had driven a little distance.

"Well, sir, it is rather. What countryman are you, if I may be so bold?"

"Guess."

"To judge from the fishing-rod and the gun, you must be an Englishman. I once guided an Englishman—let me see—one Capitan Biddul (Biddulph?) over the mountains to the Sogne Fjord. Capitan Finne, too, the Norwegian Engineer, when he was surveying, I was a good deal with him."

"Do the people hereabouts believe in the hill-folk?" (Haugefolk=fairies).

"To be sure. There used to be a strange man living at Björberg before my father took to the place; one Knut Sivardson Sivard. His head was full of those hill-people. He used to tell an odd tale of a circumstance that happened to him years ago. One Yule, when he was just going to rest, came a tap at the door. 'Who is there?' he asked. 'Neighbours,' was the reply. Opening the door, he let in three queer-looking people, with pointed

white caps and dark clothes. 'I'm Torn Hougesind,' said one, with a swarthy face and a hideous great tooth in the middle of his upper jaw. 'I'm your nearest neighbour.' 'I'm Harald Blaasind,' said another. 'I'm'—I forget what the other called himself, but it was like the other two names, the name of some of those mountains near by. 'Strange that I never saw you before,' said Sivard, doubtfully. 'But we don't live so far off; we've called in to see how you do this Yule time.' Sivard did not like the appearance of matters, but said nothing, and set before them some Yule ale in a large birch bowl, such as we use for the purpose in these parts. How they did drink, those three fellows! But Hougesind beat the rest hollow. Every now and then, as the ale mounted to his brain, the creature laughed, and showed his monster tooth."

"A modern *Curius Dentatus*," mused I.

"Presently, in mere wantonness, he bit the board, saying, he would leave a mark of his visit. Sivard's son, Knut, who was a determined young fellow, lay in bed all this while, and rightly judged that if

the ale flowed at this pace, there would be very little left for the remainder of the Christmas festivities. So he slily reached his gun, which hung on the wall, and taking good aim, fired right at Hougesind, him with the tooth, when the whole three vanished in a twinkling! Sivard used to show the mark of the tooth in the board, but I have heard that it looked just as if it had been made by a horse tooth hammered into it. However, the tale got all over the country, and folks used to come up from Christiania to see Sivardson Sivard, and hear the description of what he had seen.

"Fond of a joke was Sivard. There is a patch of grass you passed up the road—a very scarce article hereabouts. Drovers used to stop there unbeknown to him, and give their cattle a bellyful, and then came and took a glass at the house, and said nothing about it. He was determined to be even with them; so he dressed up a guy with an old helmet on, and a sword in his hand, and placed the figure close by a hovel there. Not many nights after, a drover came rushing into the house almost senseless with fright. 'He is coming, he is coming!

the Lord deliver me!' 'What now?' exclaimed Sivard. The drover explained that he was coming along, when he spied a man in armour, with dreadful glaring eyes and sword, rushing after him. He ran for his life. It was one of the Hill folk. 'Are you certain he moved?' inquired Sivard, ready to burst with laughter. 'Quite certain.' 'But where were you?' 'Oh! I had just turned out of the road a bit, to give the horses a bite of grass'—'that did not belong to you,' continued the other. 'Serve you right for trespassing.'

"But we all believe in these people up here," continued my companion. "Not so very long ago, Margit and Sunniva—two saeter girls—just when they were leaving with the cattle for home, at the end of the summer, saw two little trolls steal into the deserted hut. They observed them accurately. They were dressed in red, with blue caps, and each had a pipe and a neat little cane."

"And do these people ever do harm?"

"Oh, yes! Sometimes they injure the cattle, and make people ill. There are some women who are skilled in breaking the charm. They are called

'Signe-kone' (from signe, to exorcise, and kone, woman). One or two such live in the valley. They are considered better than any doctor for a sore."

"And what is their method of cure?"

"Why, they smear something over the place, and say a few words, and blow (blaese). Blowing is an important part of the ceremony. They measure children, too, from head to foot; that is a good thing."

"And what sort of people," asked I, "are there in the valley?"

"Oh! I can't say much for them. I'm the vorstand (a kind of churchwarden or parish trustee), so I know something about it. The priest, not long ago, told them from the pulpit that there were more bastards born, than children in lawful wedlock. But they don't care. It's all Brantvun that does it. I've seen lads come to church with a bottle of brandy, and, directly it's over, give the girls a drink. Hard work for the clergyman, I believe you. But Pastor Engelstrup—you've heard of him no doubt;—he was the man to manage

them. Prodigiously strong he was. When he was building his gaard at Gool, there was a beam three of them were trying to lift on the roof, but couldn't. 'Let me try,' said he, and raised the timber without more ado. He is gone up to Aal, in Hallingdal now. We missed him very much. He was as good as he was strong."

"Is he a big man?"

"No, not so very; but he is very thickset, with curly black hair, now got grey."

I find that Knut gets pretty well paid for maintaining a change-house in such a solitary spot as Bjöberg. The Government allows him three hundred dollars per annum for keeping the house open for travellers through the year, besides thirty dollars for every horse. He and others, he tells me, are endeavouring to get the Storthing to advance money for the purpose of rendering the river navigable to Naes, which might be done at an inconsiderable expense.

After a continued descent, we arrive at Tuff. Here a pale-faced little tatterdemalion offers to dance the Halling dance for the sum of two skillings.

They have a marvellous way in this national dance of flinging their legs high up into the air (the Hallingkast), and twisting the body a couple of times round, horizontally, in the air. Some peasant girls in green skirts, with no cincture, fastened over their shoulders with braces,—their yellow hair surmounted by a red 'buy-a-broom-girl'-shaped cap, are among the bystanders. The first course over, the lad tells me he is very poor, and begs me for some pig-tail tobacco to chew, which I was unable to give him.

I find that the peasants hereabouts keep two thousand tame reindeer, but they are not found to answer.

As we coursed down the road from Tuff to Ekre, a new station, my schuss, Ingval Olsen, points out by the waning light, to some large stones that strewed the Fjeld to the left.

"There was a gaard there, Gytogaard, under the mountain fifty years ago," said he; "but one night, when all were a-bed, the mountain came down and buried them all. Some human voices were heard for a day or two, and the cock kept crowing for eight

days long, and then all was still. No human labour could have extricated them."

Further in the wood a spot was shown me where a man was found murdered some time back, and nobody ever found out who did it, or who the murdered man was—a region of horrors.

CHAPTER XIII.

Fairy lore—A wrestle for a drinking horn—Merry time is Yule time—Head-dresses at Haga—Old church at Naes—Good trout-fishing country—A wealthy milk-maid—Horses subject to influenza—A change-house library—An historical calculation—The great national festival—Author threatens, but relents—A field-day among the ducks—Gulswig—Family plate—A nurse of ninety years—The Sölje—The little fat grey man—A capital scene for a picture—An amazing story—As true as I sit here—The goat mother—Are there no Tusser now-a-days—Uninvited guests—An amicable conversation about things in general—Hans saves his shirt—The cosmopolitan spirit of fairy lore—Adam of Bremen.

NEXT morning I found my schuss-karl was brimful of tales, which he firmly believed, about the trolls.

"You see that Fjeld," said he, pointing to a magnificent abrupt mountain behind us. "A friend of mine was taken in there on Yule night, and feasted with the hill people."

I hummed to myself, as I thought of *Young Tamlane*—

> The queen of fairies keppit him
> In yon green hill to dwell.

"They wanted," continued he, "to keep him altogether, but he got away notwithstanding. Cari Olsdatter, my sister, was changed in the cradle too when my mother had gone out one evening; but she came back just in time to see an old woman carrying off the baby, and made her give it up. There was a bag of stones left in the cradle instead.

"Torkil Hermandson, too, who lived among the hills, they say he was married to a troll-qvind ('elf-quean,' as a Lowlander would say), called Turi Hougedatter. She was to have for her dowry his fold, as full as it would hold, of fat troll-cattle. So he set to work the night before, and wattled in twice as much ground as his fold usually covered. Sly fellow was Hermandson."

"Yes, indeed," thought I, "it seemed almost as if he was taking a leaf out of dame Dido's book, when she over-reached the simple aborigines of Africa with her ox-hide *double entendre*."

My attendant has got in his harvest, so he has comparatively little for the horse to do, and offers to schuss me all the way to Naes, which offer I accept. Presently we descend the hill at Gool, the former residence of the Samsonian Gielstrup.

"You see that hillock yonder, covered with firs," said my guide, pointing to a spot lying at the confluence of the Hemsedals Elv and that of Hallingdal. "There it was where Arne Hafthorn wrestled with a troll one Christmas Eve, and got from him the great drinking horn, which has been in the family ever since. But it brought him no good. There has always been one of the family stumm (dumb) or halv-vittig (half-witted); and it is not so many years ago that Arne was found dead close by the hill there. This horn is still to be seen at a farmhouse a little way up Hallingdal. It is made of ox-horn, and mounted with some unknown metal, and rests on a stand. Ah! you smile, but it is all virkelig sant (actually true)."*

* The famous Oldenburg horn was, according to Danish tradition, given by a mountain sprite to Count Otto of Oldenburg.

"And what do you do for the fairies at Yule?" said I.

"Oh! we always place some cake and ale on the board when we go to bed at night."

"Well, and what then? Do they partake of it?"

"To be sure! It's always gone in the morning. No doubt it is taken by the 'hill people.' Merry time is Yule. We brew ale for the occasion, and bake a large cake, which we keep till Twelfth Night. Everybody stops at home on Christmas Day; but on the day after everybody goes out to visit everybody, and if you meet a person you always say, 'Glaedelig Jule' (a happy Yule to you)."

At Haga a different sort of head-dress begins to prevail among the male peasants, being a skull-cap of red cloth, like that worn by the Kirghis chiefs, as sketched by Atkinson, with stripes of black velvet radiating from the crown to the edge. Instead of the usual jacket, a green frock is worn, with stand-up collar, and an epaulet of the same coloured cloth on the shoulders.

A grove of beautiful birches here overhangs the two streams, now joined in one fine river, which

abounds with trout, some of which reach the weight of six pounds and upwards. The fly and bait are both used, I understand. At Naes there is very good accommodation at the "Merchant's," including excellent wine and fresh meat. Part of the church here is seven hundred years old, and there are one or two old pillars and a trefoil arch at the east end worth observing. The altar piece, representing the crucifixion, is by no means contemptible.

From here boats may be procured right down the stream to Green, on the Krören Fjord, some fifty miles. Every now and then the stream widens into a lake, and at times narrows into a cataract, so that a skilful boatman is required. This is by far the best way of proceeding; but the peasants are not bound by law to forward you otherwise than on the high road; so, finding there was some difficulty, I took horse and gig, thereby missing some excellent shooting and fishing. Trout of ten pounds are taken here, and there are numbers of ducks. Oats begin now to be cultivated instead of the hardier barley.

The plump, red-faced damsel who routed me out of bed in the morning, at the wretched station

of Sevre, had actually a row of five silver brooches confining the shirt over her exuberant bust. But this is nothing to the jacket with fifty silver clasps, which one of the ancient Scalds is narrated to have worn.

As I journeyed along, on a most lovely quiet autumn morning, the road would every now and then pierce into a thick pine wood, and then emerge upon the banks of the stream. More tempting spots for trout-fishing I never saw. All the horses about here, I find, come from the north of the Fjeld, few being bred in the valley. They almost invariably get a kind of influenza on coming south. The horse I am driving, which was bought at Leirdalsören for fifty dollars in the spring, is only just recovering from an attack of this kind.

At Trostem I find a bear has been seen five or six times, but there is no shooter about.

While I wait for the horse, I eat breakfast, and look about me. Wonderful to relate, I find on a shelf—what do you suppose, reader?—a Bible! yes, that was there, but there was another volume, a cookery book, printed at Copenhagen, 1799. One might as well expect to meet with a book of

Paris fashions among the squaws of the Ojibbeways. Eating, it is true, forms the main part of a Norwegian's daily thoughts, The word mad (meat, food) is everlastingly in their mouths, and the thing itself almost as frequently, six meals a day not being uncommon. But then, what food! No cookery book surely required for that. So that no doubt this book got here by mistake.

The little almanac, edited by Professor Handsteen, of Christiania, who is known in England as the author of "Travels in Siberia," also lay on the table. A little note I found in it is very significant of the simple-minded superstition that still lingers among the peasantry, of which I have been giving indications above. It is to this effect:—

"The orbit of the moon (maane-bane), has the same position with regard to the equator every nineteenth year, and it possibly may influence the atmosphere. It has been supposed, in consequence, that there is some similarity in the weather on any day to that of the corresponding day nineteen years ago. For this reason, in one column under the heading 'veirliget,' the weather is given as ob-

served at Christiania, nineteen years ago. This, however, must not be looked on as divination (ingen spaedom), but only as an historical calculation." This veirliget (weather) column having, notwithstanding the above caution, been turned by the peasants to superstitious uses, was, I hear, omitted for a time, but it had to be restored, as the bonders would not buy the almanac without it. I may here mention that the old dispute about the exact day on which St. Olaf fell at Stikklestad has been recently revived with great vigour. This great national festival has hitherto been kept on the 29th of July, "Olsok." Hakon Hakonson was crowned king on that day in 1247, and ever since it has been the coronation day of Norway. But the national mind was some time ago disagreeably disturbed by the discovery that the 29th could not after all have been the day of St. Olaf's death; for although tradition and Snorro assert that there was an eclipse of the sun on that day, it has been ascertained by astronomical calculation, that this eclipse did not take place on the 29th July, but on the 31st of August. One party, therefore, is contending for the observance of the festival on the actual day

(31st of August), while another insists upon adhering to the former date. Upon the whole, it would seem preferable to observe the day hallowed by the traditional recollections of the people. If we may be permitted such a comparison, who would like to see the festival of the Nativity altered from December 25th to some other day in the calendar?

Meantime, after an unusual delay, the fresh relay arrives; a fine black stallion, dripping wet.

"I must write a complaint in the book for this," said I. "You are long after your time. I shall never get to the end of my journey at this rate. You'll be fined a dollar, and serve you right."

"Oh! pray don't, sir; it's not my fault; the landlord's son is to blame; he never comes straight to tell us. And then the horse was over the river. I've had to swim him across, and the water is bad just now for swimming. He shall go fast, and make up for lost time."

Somewhat mollified, I did not put my threat in execution, much to the satisfaction of Svend.

Svend was a simple-minded individual in shooting matters, as I presently had occasion to see.

On the sedgy shallows of a lake, just before the river began again to contract into rapids, a score of ducks were assembled; some motionless, others busily employed in standing on their heads in the water. Leaving the carriole, I stole with much circumspection towards them, managing to keep some bushes between me and the birds, until I got within shot. Bang went one barrel, and then another, and four ducks were *hors de combat.* When I returned to the vehicle with my prize, Svend expressed great astonishment that I had fired the barrels separately, as he thought they both went off at once.* He had never seen a double-barrelled gun before. Another peasant who was by, speedily cut some birch twigs with his toll-knife, and packed up the birds, taking care to stick the bills inside, that the flies might not get into the gape (Gapë).

At length we descend upon Gulsvig, at the head of the Kroren Fjord. I at once perceived, from a glance at the interior of the house, that the station-

* The robber chief, Kombaldos, in Chinese Tartary, is related by Atkinson to have entertained a similar idea.

keeper was a man of some importance. In fact, he turned out to be the Lehnsman of the district. In the inner room there were a large quantity of silver spoons, and a huge tankard of solid silver, pegged inside, and of great weight, which at once bespoke the owners to be people of substance.

"Ah! that was left me by my grandfather," said the landlord. "It has been a very long time in the family."

"Have you got any curious remains about here?" inquired I; "any bauta-stones, for instance, or do you know any legends?"

"There is a bauta-stone up yonder in the field; but as for legends, old Moer can tell you a lot of stories about the hill-folk, but she is not always in the humour."

Gamle Moer (old mother), as he called her, Anna Olsdatter Gulsvig, just then entered the room with a pipe in her mouth. An excellent portrait of her, by a Norwegian artist, hung against the wall. Her tall figure was still erect, her eye undimmed, while her face, the complexion of which years had failed to sear, preserved traces of much

former beauty. A neat white cap, bound tight round with a red silk kerchief, confined her grey locks. On her bosom were two or three pairs of silver studs, and the national ornament, the sölje. The one which she wore was of the size and shape of a small saucer. It was of silver filigree-work, with a quantity of silver saucers (or bracteates), each about half an inch in diameter, hung to it. Similar ornaments have been found, I believe, in barrows; the pattern of them having probably been imported hither by the Varangian guard from Byzantium and the East; in the same way that these Northern mercenaries probably gave the first idea of the Scandinavian-looking trinkets which have been recently discovered in the tombs at Kertch.

"How do you do, Mrs. Anna?" so I accosted the old lady, propitiating her by the offer of some tobacco. "I hear you have some old stories; will you tell me one?"

"I can't awhile now; besides, I've forgotten them."

"Oh! but now do, Moer," supplicated a little boy, her grandson. But the old lady left the room.

Presently, however, she came in again. There was a look of inspiration in her clear grey eye, which seemed to betoken that my desire would be granted.

"It's some Huldra stories ye were wanting to hear?" said she in an odd dialect; "well, I'll just tell you one before I go and cook your dinner; you must be hungry. Let me see; yes, I once did see one of the Houge-folk."

"Indeed! how was that?"

"Well, you see, it's many years ago. I am an old woman now, over seventy. Then I was a lass of eighteen. It was one Thursday evening in September, and I was up at the saeter. Two other girls had come in, and we thought we would have a dance—and so we danced up and down the floor. The door was open, when suddenly I saw outside, staring fixedly at us, a little man, with brown breeches, grey coat, and a red cap on his head. He was very fat, and his face, it looked so dark, so dark. What a fright I was in to be sure, and the other girls too. As soon as we saw him, we left off dancing, you may depend upon it, directly. The next moment he was gone, but the other girls durst

not go to their saeters, though they were only a few yards off. We all sat crouching over the fire for the rest of the night." Rapt into days of old, the intelligent eye of the old lady gleamed like a Sibyl's, as she told her story, with much animation. At the same time, she placed her hand, half unconsciously, as it seemed, on mine, the little boy all the while drinking in the tale with suspended breath and timid looks; reminding me of the awful eagerness with which Béranger, I think, describes the grandchildren listening to some old world story of grandmamma's. A capital scene it was for a picture—the group is still before me.

"You must have been mistaken," said I.

"Not at all. That's not the only time I've seen a Tuss."

"Indeed! How was that?"

"One time I was up at the saeter with Turi, another girl. We were just going to bed, when a stave was put through the little window-pane (gluggen), and moved gently backwards and forwards. We were frightened at first, but we heard a titter outside, and then we knew directly what it meant. It was two Friers (lovers) come, so we got up and let

them in, and we were soon all four in bed together."

"What!" exclaimed I, in amazement.

"Oh, that's the way we have here. Of course, you know we were dressed."

"And were you married to the man afterwards?"

"No; I married quite another person."

"I did just the same," put in her son, the Lehnsman, who had just entered. "We see no harm in that. A young farmer's son often sleeps with a companion in this way, but she must be of the same rank of life as he is. If it was with a servant girl, it would be considered a disgrace."

"Well, but go on with your story," said I to the narrator.

"Where was I? Let me see. Yes, we were in bed all snug, chatting away, when suddenly I heard a noise at the window. 'Hush!' whispered I—'what's that? Listen.'

"We saw at this moment a pole put through the window, just like before. What a fright we were in. But we lay quite still. Presently the pole was drawn back, and a minute after there was a terrible noise in the fiös among the cattle—a loud

lowing and bellowing, just as if one of them was being killed. Up we all got in a trice, and rushed out, and I saw a tuss stroking a black cow. It was in a muck sweat; this is as true as I sit here. It was at Nor-saeter, a mile from the farm in Signedal, where I lived before I was gift (married) up here."

"What is that tale about the goat, mother?"

"Oh, ah! At Fagerlid, in Eggedal, a woman came one evening with a white female goat, and begged the master to change it for a buck. He declined. She came again three Thursday evenings running, till at last he consented. They knew pretty well who she must be, for they saw something like the end of a tail behind her. So, when she went away, they cast a toll-knife after her, to prevent any evil consequences. They never repented the change; the female goat she left gave such an astonishing quantity of milk. As for the person who brought her, they never saw her again."

"But there are no tusser now-a-days?" inquired I.

With a mysterious look the old lady took a pinch of snuff, and started off talking again, to the great delight of the small urchin; and so fast did she talk,

that it was only by extraordinary attention, and stopping her now and then for an explanation of her antique dialect, that I succeeded in mastering the story.

"To be sure there are; people are seeing them constantly. It is only ten years ago, that on the evening after Christmas, Hans Östenson, of Melbraten-gaard, three-quarters of a mile above Trostem, which you passed, heard a terrible noise in the fiös (byre). He thought that the cows and sheep must have got together. So he lit a torch, and went out to see; but directly he came into the byre all was quiet in a moment, and the cattle were in their right places. The man, suspecting glamour, took effectual means to put a stop to it, by immediately striking his axe into the beam over the door of the cattle-shed.* Meantime Hans' wife, who was sick in bed, observed a crowd of little people hustle into the house as soon as her husband was

* In the Isle of Man, so long occupied by Norwegians, we find a similar legend. At the good woman's second accouchement, Waldron relates, a noise was heard in the cow-house, which drew thither the whole assistants. They returned, on finding that all was right among the cattle, and lo! the second child had been carried from the bed, and dropped in a lane.

out of it, and lay dunen (bedding of eider-down) for themselves on the floor, and betake themselves to repose. She kept quite still. Presently the master returned with the news that 'It's all right; no harm done;' at the same moment he claps his eyes on the little people stretched on the floor. 'Holloa, my masters! What now?' said he, in a jovial tone, having drunk a tolerable quantity of Yule ale that evening. 'Who are you, and whither bound?' 'We've had a long journey of it,' replied one of the little people, rousing up, in somewhat shrill tones. 'We've come all the way from Kongsberg town. We've been to the doctor there.' 'Why so?' 'Why, Mars Hulte (the servant of the gaard), when he was pouring the ale from the vat into the barrel, the other evening, let the cullender drop on the leg of one of our people, who happened to be near, though Hulte did not see him, and hurt it sorely. We want to stop here to-night; besides which, we wish to have a talk with you.' 'Very good,' said Hans, not a whit disconcerted; 'make yourselves at home; you seem to be acquainted with the house already. Just look out there, while I step into bed!' And

forthwith he picked his way, with much circumspection, between the prostrate forms of the tiny people. This was no easy matter, as they lay so close together upon the floor. But he gained the bed, fortunately without doing any more damage than treading on the tip of one oldish fellow's toe, who set up a sharp scream.

"'Well, and where do you live?' said Hans, resuming his place under the skin (fell) by the side of his better half, who was perfectly astonished at her good man's boldness. 'We live just below here, under Melbraten Hatte; but we are a good deal annoyed by one of your horses, that stables near there. The sewage leaks through, and drops on our table. The request we have to make is, that you'll be so good as to move his quarters.' 'Besides which,' said a Huldre, larger than the rest, who, at this moment, came from a corner, and stood bolt-upright by the bed-side, 'one good turn deserves another. You were making a coat for the lad, just before Yule—you remember?' At this Hans started. 'And you thought you should not have enough cloth, but you had. Do you know why? It was I who stretched out the cloth, so that you had

enough, and to spare. There was a bit left for me too. Look here, this coat I have on was made of it!'

"On this, Hans said he should have no objection to comply with their request. The conversation then dropped, and from odd noises, a sort of miniature snore, which Hans heard about, he perceived that the little men in grey were dropping off to sleep again. It would never do, however, for the master of the house to follow their example, with such outlandish guests in the house. So he took care to keep his eyes well open. Before long, by the flickering embers of the fire, he saw the tallest gentleman take his (Hans's) shirt, which his wife had put out for the morrow, and begin tearing it into shreds. 'Hold hard there!' exclaimed Hans, whose wife, overcoming her fears, had jogged him, when she saw the produce of her industry thus impudently destroyed. 'Hold hard! I say.' 'We're short of linen,' answered the Huldra, soothingly, 'and this shirt of yours will make up into a great many shirts for us.' 'Hold hard!' again screamed Hans, whose mettle was thoroughly roused, his spouse also being in a great state of pucker, 'or I'll cock the rifle, by the rood!'

"Whether it was his gesture to reach down the rifle, or whether the name of Cors (Rood or Cross) did it, Hans could not say; but they were all off in a moment. It was quite a treat to see them bundling out, helter-skelter, as hard as ever they could get out," added the ancient dame, whose upraised eyebrows, and a twitch at the corner of her mouth, showed that she was no foe to mirth, and enjoyed the rapid exit of the Trolls extremely.

"Such lots of them," continued she, excitedly, as if she saw them there and then, "he could not count them. He hurried after them to the doorway, and got a sight of them, by the light of the snow and the stars, mounting on their horses, and riding away as fast as they could lay legs to ground. On examining his shirt, he found it was quite whole again. So no damage was done after all. He took care, however, to move the horse, in order to abate the nuisance complained of, and the animal throve remarkably well in his new quarters. But I must get your dinner ready."

And so out the old lady went, in due time returning with some pancakes and fried siek, a sort

of fresh-water herring, which, with perch and trout, abounds in the lake close by.

While the repast was digesting, I began to ruminate on these stories, and the remarkable likeness, nay, even identity, some of them exhibit to the superstitions of that part of Great Britain where the Northern invaders mostly frequented. Fairy lore is traced by some authors to the Pagan superstitions of Greece and Rome, and to the superstitions of the East. But we prefer to regard these supernatural beings in Scandinavia rather as in the main of home-growth than as exotics; the creations of a primitive people, who, living among wonderful natural phenomena, and being ignorant of their cause, with the proverbial boldness and curiosity of ignorance, were fond of deriving an origin for them of their own manufacture, and one stamped with the impress of their own untutored imaginations. And what a country they live in for the purpose!* None fitter could have been devised for the residence and operations of mysterious and frightful beings. Plod along the calm, friendly landscape of England,

* Faye, Norske Folkesagn.

dotted thickly with houses and steeples, with the church bells ringing merrily, or the station bell clanging imperatively (bells are the *bête noire* of Trolls), and the scene alive with people,—a chaw-bacon, with no speculation in his eye, driving along the heavy wain, or a matter-of-fact "commercial" labouring along with his loaded four-wheel over the dusty *strata viarum*,—and I'll defy you to be otherwise than common-place and unimaginative. But let even a highly-educated man wander alone through the tingling silentness of the mighty pine-woods of the North, broken at one time by the rumble of an earthslip, at another by the roar of a waterfall, seething in some weird chasm. Let him roam over the grey fjeld, and see through the morning mist a vast head bent threateningly over him, and, unless he be a very Quaker, his imagination will turn artist or conjuror, and people the landscape with the half-hidden forms of beings more or less than human. And so it was with the old heathen Norskman, living all alone in the wilderness. When he heard the tempest howl through the ravine, and saw the whirlwind crumple up the trees, it must be the spirits of Asgaard

sweeping by with irresistible force. If in autumn evenings strange gabblings were heard aloft, caused by the birds of passage moving southward, it must be troll-wives on their airy ride. If lights were seen on the stream at night, they were "corpse lights," though in reality only caused by some fellow burning the water for salmon. If the ice split with sudden and fearful sound, engulphing the hopeless wayfarer, it was an evil spirit, requiring a human sacrifice. Those pot-looking holes and finger-marks in the rocks—those mysterious foot-marks, whence were they? Those strange, grotesque figures, as like as they can be to human forms and faces—they must once have been evil beings or demons, now turned to stone by some superior power—a power that at one time revealed itself in the hissing race aloft of the Borealis; at another time blasted and shivered the rocks in thunder and lightning. The sea naturally would be a special locality for these sprites. Did not they often see phantom-ships, which a modern would explain by the natural phenomenon of the mirage? Did not sea-monsters from time to time show themselves to the lone fisherman? Did not

they often see strange sights at the bottom of the transparent deep? Did not the calm surface suddenly rise into ruffian, crested billows, while dismal shrieks would echo at the same time from the rock-piercing caverns?

But other causes were at work. The more ancient inhabitants of Scandinavia, some of them of giant size and prodigious strength, others small of stature but very agile, like the Fins or Laps, were driven into the mountains by Odin and his Asiatics. From these hiding-places they would at times emerge—the former to do deeds of ferocity and violence, the latter to practise some of their well-known tricks, such as thieving, changing children, kidnapping people away with them. And this would, in process of time, give rise to the fancy of the existence of supernatural beings, gigantic Jotuls and tiny Trolls (in the Edda Finnr is the name for dwarfs), endued with peculiar powers. In the same way the vulgar Scotch ascribed superhuman attributes to the Picts, or Pechts.

Adam of Bremen, in the eleventh century, says that Sweyne Estridson, King of Denmark, told him that in Sweden people used to come from the

hills and do great damage, and then disappear. The same author relates that in Norway there were wild women and men, who lived in the woods, and were something between men and beasts. The existence of these creatures, by whatever name called, being once assumed, all sorts of explanations were given of their origin. Thus, there is an odd Swedish superstition, that when God hurled down Lucifer and his host from heaven, they did not all fall into the burning lake, but that some fell into the sea, others upon the earth, and became the various spirits proper to those places. Another not less quaint Danish legend is to this effect:—When Eve was washing her bairns one day in a spring, the Almighty suddenly called to her. Alarmed, she threw those of her bairns that she had not washed aside, when God asked her whether all her children were there. She replied, "Yes." Whereupon he said, "What thou hast tried to hide from God shall be hidden from men." In a moment the unwashed children were separated from the others, and disappeared. Before the flood, God put them all into a hole, the entrance of which he fastened. From them all the underground people spring. Others again, say

that they descend from Adam, by his first wife, Lileth, while others pronounce them to be a mixed race of the sons of God and daughters of men. Even Hermann Ruge, the pastor of Slidre, in Norway, in 1754, gravely talked of underground people who were something between men and beasts. While that strange compound of superstition and enthusiasm, Luther himself, speaks of changelings as a matter of course.

But it is time to think of another sort of changeling, I mean the fresh horse, which, after a long delay, has arrived at the door. "Good bye, Mrs. Anna, many thanks."

"Farvel, farvel! if you meet with Tidemann on your travels, say Anna Gulsvig sends him her greeting. Bless you, sir, we knew him well; he was at my son's wedding, and pictured us all."

She was alluding to the celebrated painter of that name, who resides in Düsseldorf, but visits his native country, Norway, every summer, returning home rich with pictorial spoils, gained in scenes like these. Professor Gude, the eminent painter, also of Düsseldorf, is the son of a gentleman who held a government office in this neighbourhood.

CHAPTER XIV.

A port-wine pilgrimage—The perfection of a landlady—Old superstitious customs—Levelling effects of unlevelled roads—A blank day—Sketch of an interior after Ostade—A would-be resurrectionist foiled—The voices of the woods—Valuable timber—A stingy old fellow—Unmistakable symptoms of civilization—Topographical memoranda—Timber logs on their travels—The advantages of a short cut—A rock-gorge swallows a river—Ferry talk—Welcome—What four years can do for the stay-at-homes—A Thelemarken manse—Spæwives—An important day for the millers—How a tailor kept watch—The mischievous cats—Similarity in proverbs—"The postman's knock"—Government patronage of humble talent—Superannuated clergymen in Norway—Perpetual curates—Christiania University examination—Norwegian students—The Bernadotte dynasty—Scandinavian unity—Religious parties—Papal propagandists at Tromsö—From fanaticism to field-sports—The Linnæa Borealis.

DRIVING through the woods on the shores of the lake, after a good deal of up and down hill, I at length arrived at the ferry, twenty miles from

Gulsvig, where the Krorenfjord contracts into a river. Green, the station for the night, affords excellent accommodation; so much so, that the notorious Danish Count (See *Oxonian in Norway*), so addicted to bear-hunting, has been up as far as here on purpose to taste the port-wine. By-the-bye, I encountered a Norsk proverb to-day, which if it were not ancient, would almost seem to have been made for the Count: "Han har skut Björn," literally, "he has shot a bear," is said of a man who is drunk. People in that state not only see double, but shoot with the longbow.

Gunild Green was the perfection of a landlady, putting meat and good bread before the wayfarer, and beer of the best. Her blue jacket, with its odd gussets behind, and broad edging of red and yellow braid, did not, it is true, reach nearly down to the place where a woman's waist ought to be. But that was no matter, for the skirt made up for the omission by advancing to the jacket. Her Quaker-like, quiet face was framed in a neat cap, and the forehead bound in with a silk kerchief. All about the house betokened considerable wealth.

But notwithstanding that these people are of the Upper Ten Thousand of Norway, I hear that the old superstitious customs still obtain at the gaard. A cross in chalk, or an axe or a toll-knife is placed over every cattle-shed at Yule. The old lady gave no reason further than it was skik (custom). A cake with a cross of juniper berries made on the top of it is baked at Christmas against Candlemas-day (Kyndel-misse). In other parts of Norway a small cake is baked for each person, and not eaten till twenty days after. Again, the sledges are never allowed at Christmas to lie flat on the ground, but are reared up against the wall. If anybody goes thrice round the house, then looks in at a window through a black kerchief and sees anyone at the board without a head, that person will die before next Yule.

The day after Yule the men go out with the cowhouse ordure very early, before light. They never, if they can help it, bring in water for the copper on Yule, but get a supply into the house the day before. On Christmas Eve every person of condition has a mess of rice-porridge, and the servants in better class houses come into the room and receive a glass of something comfortable. The

cattle are not overlooked on this great Christian festival. "Come, Dokkero," says the milkmaid, just like some girl in Theocritus, to her cow, "you shall have some good food to-day."

Finding that I can go some five miles by water, I select that method of conveyance. Indeed, I should prefer this species of locomotion for the rest of the journey, for I find, on examination, that in consequence of the jolting motion of the country carts, my effects are pounded up as if they had been brayed in a mortar. One or two silk kerchiefs have turned into tatters, and the sand of the cartridges has oozed out and become mixed up with the contents of the broken Macassar oil bottle, which I had destined for my elf-locks on again reaching civilization. The boat was long and narrow, and easily rowed, but the stalwart rower was hardly a match in speed for some little black and white ducks to which we gave chase. At last we got among them. Down they dived, and, as they re-appeared, off went my gun; but in consequence of the crankness of the boat, it was impossible to take aim quick enough, and, after a few unavailing shots, I gave up the game, fairly beaten. My fishing tackle likewise

did no execution among the trout, which now begin to get smaller. The boatman mentioned two other kinds of fish to be found here, "scad" and "jup."

In fact we are now getting out of the wild sporting of the upper valleys, although six rifles suspended in the passage of the next station-house, Vassenrud, betokened the existence of large fowl, and probably beasts of prey, in the forests around. Countless logs float down this river, and I see here a list of the different brands used by the Drammen merchants to distinguish the several owners.

As the horse I was to have lived across the Sound, I had ample time to look about me, and observe the peculiarities of the establishment. The best room floor was painted in figures, around it were ranged a score of high-backed, old-fashioned leather chairs, stamped with a pattern. I wish the author of the Sketch-book could have seen them; he would have made them all tell a history at once. Leaving this room, I followed my nose, and entered the door facing. A very fat man, with a heavy, sleepy eye, quite a tun of a fellow, a red skull-cap striped with black on his head, sat in his shirt sleeves eating a leg of veal, which was

flanked by some nice-looking bread and a bottle of brandy. It was only nine, A.M., but the opportunity was not to be lost, so I fell to also. Beside me, on a shelf, was a tankard of massive silver, weighing one hundred and twenty lod = about sixty-five ounces English. Pretty well to do, thought I, these peaceful descendants of the Vikings.

In reply to my query whether there were any old memorials about, the obese Boniface moved his lack-lustre eye slowly, and shook his head. Old memorials, forsooth! were not the newly-killed calf and its appetizing adjuncts subjects much more worthy of attention? Presently, however, after an interval of seemingly profound thought, he observed that there was something like a coffin or two in the forest a mile off.

"Had they been opened?"

"No. People thought it unlucky to touch them. They were near his hûsman's, and the hûsman would show me them if I mentioned his name."

At the hûsman's I found nobody but his wife, who was ignorant on the subject. So, after a fatiguing search, I returned without having accomplished my purpose, and the horse having arrived,

I had to start. The fat man was now recumbent on the bed within, looking uncommonly like a barrel of beer. All Norwegians take a siesta at noon. The charge made for my sumptuous repast was twelve skillings = five-pence English. As we roll along gaily through the sombre pine-forests, the odour of which the Norwegians, I think wrongly, compare to that of a "dead house" (Liighus). I fall, as a matter of course, into conversation with Knut, my schuss.

"Had he ever seen these trolls which people talked of so much higher up the valley."

"No; I never *saw* one; but I've *heard* one."

"Indeed, where?"

"When I was hewing wood in the forest."

"What did he say?"

"He only said 'Knut' three times."

"And did you speak?"

"No—that would have been unlucky. They are not such bad people, folks say, if you only become well acquainted with them."

In the forest we passed some splendid trees near Snarum. "Valuable timber about here," I observed.

"Yes, very. It's not long ago that some sold for a hundred dollars a-piece (twenty pound sterling); they were seventy feet long, and more than four in diameter. Vassenrud (the fat station-master, no wonder, with all this property, he is fat) has a deal of forest. He sold some lately. He got sixteen thousand dollars for giving leave to fell the timber on a square mile (seven English), none to be cut smaller than nine inches in diameter, eighteen feet from the ground. These trees just here belong to a stingy old fellow, who lives down there by the side of the river, Ole Ulen. A man came from the By (town) to see them, and make a purchase."

"'I have come to look at the trees,' said he.

"'Oh, yes,' said Ole Ulen; 'we'll go and see them.'

"Arrived in the forest, the stranger measured the big trees with his eye, and thought they would suit exactly.

"'Fine trees, aren't they?' said Ole Ulen, adjusting his spectacles, and almost breaking his neck to look up at the trees. 'So tall and so thick,' he continued, like a miser gloating over his treasure.

"'Not bad,' replied the proposing buyer, in a careless tone, chuckling inwardly at the thought of the bargain he was going to drive with the plainly-dressed, simple-looking old bonder, but careful not to betray his admiration of the magnificent timber, for fear of sending up the prices.

"'No, not so bad,' said Ole Ulen, as they walked homeward.

"'Well, what's to be the price?' asked the merchant, while they were drinking a glass of brandy.

"'Price!' replied the other; 'I'm not going to sell them—never thought of it. You asked to look at them, and so you have, and welcome, and well worth seeing they are.'

"'Well, no doubt,' said Knut; 'he might do what he liked with his own trees. Sell them or not, as he thought proper.'

"But he's so fond of his money, he wont help his own kith and kin. There was his son-in-law, over the river, had just completed a purchase, and went to him to borrow three hundred dollars.

"'Very sorry,' was his reply, 'but he had got no cash in the house.'

"The young man went and got accommodated at another farm, and then returned to Ule's.

"'Well, how have you fared?'

"'All right; I got the loan. They were the more willing to lend, for they had some notes of old date, which are to be called in by the bank at Trondjem, before the month's out, and it will save them the trouble and expense of sending them up there.'

"'Ay, so,' replied Ule, meditatively. 'What is the date of the notes that are to be called in? Perhaps I may have some.' And going to an old cupboard, he produced from a coffee-pot seven hundred dollars."

We now get into an enclosed and more cultivated country, and see symptoms of civilization as we approached Vikersund, in the shape of a drunken man or two staggering homewards; and, at the merchant's, where I stop to make some small purchase, there is a crowd of peasants clustering round the counter, or sitting in corners, imbibing corn brantviin.

At Vikersund the road forks. That to the left

leads to Christiania, by the shores of the beautiful Tyri Fjord and the pass of Krog-Kleven; the other crossing the wide sound, the only vent of the Tyri, Hols, and Rand fjords, by a very long bridge, goes to Drammen and Kongsberg.

In the stream lie thousands of logs that have been cut down in the mountains and along the feeders of this glorious waterway, to the very foot of the Fillefjeld. Some of them have, perhaps, left their native grove two or three years ago, and would never have got here were it not for certain persons jogging their memories and goading them into unwilling activity. One of the most characteristic features of a Norwegian valley are gangs of burly broad-chested men, armed with huge poles, the ends of which are shod with a hook and spike. Directly there are symptoms of the water rising after rain, these fellows appear suddenly, and are seen pushing the stranded timbers from the shore, dashing through the water in their great jack-boots, to islands or shoals, for the like purpose, or boating across the river to set afloat some straggling laggard; and, forthwith, all these, like so many great cadises,

just disengaged from their anchor, and soon to take wing, go swarming down the stream. The boat, by-the-bye, used by these Norsk equivalents to the Far West lumber-men, is never destined to return to its mountain home, but will be sold below for what it will fetch.

In Norway scenes are constantly meeting the traveller's eye, whether it be such as that just described, or the rude log-huts, or the countless tree stumps, the work of the axe, or the unthinned density of forests which are not near any water-course, which forcibly bring to one's mind Oliphant's description of Minnesota and the Far West. But there is this trifling difference, that whereas there you may as likely as not be bulleted, or your weasand slit by a bowie-knife, you are safer in this country than in any land in Europe.

As it was my purpose to visit a clergyman in the neighbourhood, I left the main route, and took a short cut, by which I saved six miles in distance, though not in time. For the short way was a pleasant alternation of ledges of rock and mud-pits. Fortunately I was provided with an air-

cushion to sit upon, or the jolting must have proved fatal, at all events to my teeth. If there is no dentist here—such a thing I never heard of in Norway—there ought to be.

After four or five miles up and down, we descended in good earnest through a straggling grove of pines, their dark foliage now rendered darker by the fast approaching night. To our left I could see something white, and heard fierce roarings. The broad expanse of water at Vikersund had narrowed into a mere fissure, only a few yards across, with splintered walls of overhanging rock. What! that small-throated boa-constrictor going to swallow up such a monstrous lump of water at a mouthful? Choked it will be, and no mistake. See, what a chattering, and frothing, and smoking! That lot of trees, too, they must stick in his gizzard; half-a-dozen have lodged there already, firm and immovable, as if riveted by the strongest bolts. A few steps more, and behold! the strife has ceased; the logs, together with the boiling soapsuds, have shot through the tunnel or funnel, and lie heaving and panting on the waters of

another river of no little breadth and volume, which, swiftly gliding through the forest, cuts in here, and joins the narrow outlet of the great Drammen river at right angles.

After their prodigious tussle, it must be quite a relief to those much battered logs to rock in the comparatively tranquil lap of the Hallingdal river; for it is my old friend of Hemse-Fjeld reminiscence—who kept now rollicking and roaring like a school-boy, now floating lightly and whispering softly, like a miss in her teens, as we journeyed along together—that here clubs its fortunes with the lusty progeny of the Fille-fjeld.

At the fork made by the two streams dwelt a ferryman, who speedily transferred my effects from the carriole to his frail boat. It required careful navigation to get over; as the surge of the Vikersund river—which, as the ferryman told me, albeit it had come through such an eye of a needle, was by far the bigger of the two—was of such momentum and so sudden in its dash that the crowding waters of the Halling were struck all of a heap by the concussion, and fairly turned round

and fled. After recovering the first shock, however, it gradually established a nearer intimacy with the boisterous stranger, and they presently made a fresh start forward, and vaulted together over a rugged rapid below, which I could just see gleaming through the dusky shades of the evening, and the forest. The first struggles with the world of the new-married couple.

"We have only to get up the hill," said the ferryman, shouldering my pack, as we safely reached the opposite shore, "and we shall be soon at the parson's house."

A warm welcome did I get from my friend the pastor. He recognised my voice directly, as he opened the door in the dark.

"Vilkommen, Vilkommen, Metcalfe! Hvor staae til? (welcome, Metcalfe! how are you?) Det fornoie mig meget, at de har ikke glemt os (I'm glad you've not forgotten us).

And I was speedily in the Stue, shaking hands with the Frue (clergymen's wives have by law this title; merchants' wives are only madame). Her fair, good-humoured face fatter, and her figure

rounder than when I saw her four years ago at the mountain parish in the west. Lisa, too, the hobbledehoy girl, all legs and arms, like a giblet pie, has now become quite a woman, and more retiring. The baby, Arilda, too, runs about bigger and bonnier, while Katinka, another and elder sister, whom I have never seen before, comes forward to greet her father's friend. There are also some ladies from the "by" (town), with the latest news, foreign and domestic.

I spend a day or two with my kind and intelligent host and his family. Much of his income is derived from land, so that he farms on a large scale. The house is beautifully situate. Beneath us may be seen the river playing at hide and seek among umbrageous woods. On the hills opposite is the mother church of the district, with large frams clustering about it. The neighbourhood abounds in minerals. Not far off is a cobalt-work, now under the auspices of a Saxon company, and which is said to be productive. If the old derivation for cobold be from cobalt, because that particular sort of sprite's favourite

habitat is a mine of this description, I shall, no doubt, pick up a goblin story or two at the manse.

Katinka, the eldest girl, is very well read; better certainly than any I have met with in the country, for they are not a reading people. She sings a national song or two with much feeling, and explains to me the meaning of them, which, as they are written in old Norsk, would be otherwise difficult of comprehension.

"But how do you know the meaning of this outlandish lingo?—it's not a bit like the written Norsk of the present time."

"It was not for nothing," replied she, "that I lived from a baby in the mountain parish where we first saw you. The inhabitants of those sequestered dales still use many of the old words and forms of speech."

I was soon on my hobby—legends and superstitions.

"Have you any witches or spae-wives, as they are called in Scotland?" asked I.

"Signé-kierringe, you mean. Oh, yes. They

are still to be found. My aunt there, when she was a girl, was measured by one."

"How so?"

"They take a string, which they pretend has been prepared in some wonderful manner, and measure round the waist, and along the arms, and so on most accurately, and there is supposed to be some wonderful virtue in the operation. It is a sure recipe against all harm from the Nisser. But I have a book here, with a tale of one Mads, a warlock. He was cutting timber in the forest; it was about midday. He had just got the wedge into a fallen tree, when he saw his old woman come up with his dinner. It was romme-grödt (a peculiar sort of porridge). She sat down, when he just spied a tail peeping out behind her, which she chanced to stick in the cleft that he had made in the tree. Mads bade her wait a bit, and he would sit down and eat directly. The cunning fellow meantime managed to get the wedge out. The crack closed, and the tail was fast. At the same time he uttered Jesus' name. Up started the hag, and snapped off the end of her tail. What a scream

she gave. On looking at the dinner, he found it was nothing but some cow-dung in a bark basket."

"Have not the peasantry here," I inquired, "some odd notions about the fairies stopping the wheel of the water-mill?"

"Oh, yes!" replied Miss Katinka. "September 1st is an important day for the millers. If it is dry on that day it will be dry, they say, for a long time. This is owing to the Quernknurre (mill sprite).

"There is a tale in Asbjörnsen of a miller near Sandok Foss, in Thelemarken (I visited this place afterwards), whose mill-wheel would not go, although there was plenty of water. He examined the machinery accurately, but could not discover what was amiss. At last he went to the small door that opened into the wheel-box. Opening it a very little he spied a most vicious-looking troll poking about inside. Closing the door with all speed, before the troll caught sight of him, he went to his hut and put on the fire a large pot full of tar. When it was boiling hot he went to the wheel door and opened it wide. The troll inside, who was

busy scotching the wheel, faced round at him in a moment, and opened his mouth (or rather his head) wider than a warming pan, indeed so wide that his gape actually reached from the door sill to the top of the door. 'Did you ever see such a gape as that in all your life?' said he to the miller. Without a moment's delay the miller poured the hot pitch right into the monster's throat (which might be called pitching it into him), and answered the inquiry by asking another, 'Did you ever get such a hot drink before?' It would appear that the miller had effectually settled the creature, for he sunk down into the water with a fearful yell, and never was heard of more. From that day forward the miller throve, and much grist came to him, actually and figuratively."

Miss Katinka was not a classical scholar, so I suppressed certain illustrations which rose to my tongue, as she told the story, such as "hians immane," and the miller having used a most effectual digamma for stopping the hiatus; and I told her instead, that in the Scottish highlands there is a kindred being called Urisk, a hairy sprite,

who sets mills at work in the night when there is nothing to grind, and that he was once sent howling away by a pan full of hot ashes thrown into his lap when asleep.

"I have read another curious story of a mill," continued my fair informant.

"There was a peasant up in the west whose mill (quern) was burned down two Whitsuntides following. The third year, on Whitsun Eve, a travelling tailor was staying with him, making some new clothes for the next day. 'I wonder whether my new mill will be burnt down to-night again?' said the peasant. 'Oh, I'll keep watch,' exclaimed the tailor; 'no harm shall happen.' True to his word, when night came on, the knight of the shears betook himself to the mill. The first thing he did was to draw a large circle with his chalk on the floor, and write 'Our Father' round it, and, that done, he was not afraid, no not even if the fiend himself were to make his appearance. At midnight the door was suddenly flung open, and a crowd of black cats came in. The tailor watched. Before long the new comers lit a fire in the chimney-

corner, and got a pot upon it, which soon began to bubble and squeak, as if it was full of boiling pitch. Just then, one of the cats slily put its paw on the side of the pot, and tried to upset it. 'Mind, nasty cat, you'll burn yourself,' said the tailor, inside his ring. 'Mind, nasty cat, you'll burn yourself, says the tailor to me,' says the cat to the other cats. And then all the cats began dancing round the ring. While they were dancing, the same cat stole slily to the chimney-corner and was on the point of upsetting the pot, when the tailor exclaimed, 'Mind, nasty cat, you'll burn yourself.' 'Mind, nasty cat, you'll burn yourself, says the tailor to me,' says the cat to the other cats. And then the whiskered crew began to dance again round the tailor. Another attempt at arson was made with no better success. And all the cats danced round the tailor, quicker and quicker, their eyes glowing, till his head spun round again. But still he luckily kept his self-possession and his sense. At last the cat, which had tried to upset the pot, made a grab at him over the ring, but missed. The tailor was on the alert, and next time the cat's paw

came near he snipped it off short with his shears. What a spitting and miauling they did make, as they all fled out of the mill, leaving the tailor to sleep quietly in his ring for the rest of the night. In the morning he opened the mill door and went down to the peasant's house. He and his wife were still in bed, for it was Whitsun morning, and they were having a good sleep of it. How glad the miller was to see the tailor. 'Good morrow to you,' he said, reaching out his hand, and giving the tailor a hearty greeting. 'Good morrow, mother,' said the tailor to the wife, offering her his hand. But she looked so strange and so pale, he could not make it out. At last she gave him her left hand, and kept the other under the sheepskin. Ay, ay, thought the tailor, I see how the ground lies.

"The miller-wife was one of the subterranean people, then," I put in.

"No doubt of it," said Miss Katinka.

"If the tailor had been an Englishman," observed I, "we should have said that he 'knew which way the cat jumped;'" and then I had to explain, and

this elicited the remark, that the Norwegians are by no means deficient in proverbs.

"Have you a Norwegian equivalent to our commonest of English proverbs—'to carry coals to Newcastle?'"

"Yes," put in the worthy pastor, "but with a difference. We say, 'to carry the bucket over the brook to fetch water.'"

"Well, we have another, not less common—'to reckon upon your chickens before they are hatched.'"

"That's our 'you must not sell the skin till you've shot the bear.' It's just the same as yours, but with a local colouring."

"All these proverbs, by the way, are not true," continued I. "There is an English proverb that it requires nine tailors to make a man: as if a tailor was inferior to the rest of mankind in courage. That last story of Miss Katinka's is a proof to the contrary. I remember being in Berlin, just after the revolution of 1848, and visiting the cemetery of those who had fallen. There was one monument to the memory of one Johann Schwarz, with an in-

scription to the effect that he fought like a hero, and received nine, or maybe nineteen wounds. Indeed, at the London police-offices, whenever a man is brought before his Worship for assault and battery of the worst description, or for drubbing the policemen within an inch of their lives, the odds are that it will be a tailor with a little body and a great soul."

But my last observations were quite lost on my fair informant. For at this moment a letter was put into her hands, and she escaped from the room, her colour rising, and her thoughtful eye assuming a softer and more conscious expression.

"It's Katinka's weekly letter from her betrothed," explained her father, when she had gone; "they always correspond once a week, and this is the day when the post arrives."

As I was walking about the house, in company with my clerical friend, I had a fresh proof of the facilities afforded in this country to clever artisans to improve themselves. Thus, one Ole, who is driving the hay-cart up the steep inclined plane to the hayloft, over the cow-house, has shown a strong turn for mechanics, and on the clergyman's recommendation

has obtained from the government three hundred dollars to defray the expense of a journey to England, that he may be further initiated and perfected in the mysteries of his trade.* Another man about the farm, who has exhibited much natural talent as an engraver, is going to be sent to Christiania, to a craftsman in that line.

Among other things, I hear from my host of a regulation, in respect to ecclesiastical matters, which is well worth mentioning. In England, as we all know, no provision is made by the law for pensioning off a superannuated clergyman, or for the support of a clergyman's widow; nay, the very sensible proposal to pension a bishop, the other day, was decried as simony. Not so in Norway. The widow of a beneficed clergyman here has a proportion of the income of the benefice (from twenty to sixty dollars) during her life. Besides this, there is attached to most parishes what is called an Enkesæde (widow farm). Formerly she cultivated this herself; but, by a late regulation, these places have been sold, and she has the profits, which vary, in different cases, in amount.

Besides the beneficed clergy, there are in Norway

another class of clergy called Residerende Capellan. He holds a chapel of ease in some large parish, with land and house attached, but is quite independent of the rector. His appointment, like that of the beneficed clergy generally, is vested in the king. On a vacancy, the applications are received by the government, and sent to the king, marked 1, 2, 3, in order of merit. He generally chooses the first, but not always. The number of these chaplains is small—not above ten in all Norway. In some respects, the Residerende Capellan has less work than the Sogne Prest, or rector. Thus the Fattig-wesen, or arrangement for the relief of the poor, is chiefly managed by the Sogne Prest.

The Personal Capellan corresponds to an English curate. Whenever a rector requires a curate, he is bound to take one who is out of employment; and he cannot get rid of him, but must retain his services as long as he is rector. His successor in the living, however, is not similarly bound. It is conceivable that the rector and curate may have differences, and that this perpetuity of connexion may in some instances become irksome to both.

Generally, however, it is found to work well—they make the best of it, like a sensible man and wife. And the curate is not exposed, as he sometimes is in England, to the caprices of a rector, or a gynæcocratical rectoress. Nor, again, is the public eye offended in this country with those unpleasant advertisements of curates holding the views of Venn, with strong lungs, or of Anglicans skilful in intoning and church decoration.

"What examinations have you at the University of Christiania?" I asked.

"There are three. First, the Philosophisk, *i.e.*, a mixed classical examination; second, one in mathematics, physics, theology, and other subjects; and, three years later, there is what is called an Embeds examen (faculty examination), which, for the future clergyman, is in divinity; for the lawyer, in law; and so on. After this examination, however, a clergyman is not compelled to be ordained directly—indeed, he can put this off for some years."

"And are the Norwegian students such ardent spirits as their brethren in Germany?"

"Ardent enough, but blessed, I hope, with more

common sense. They are intense lovers of liberty, and their minds are full of the idea of Scandinavian unity—*i.e.*, a junction not only moral, but political, of the three kingdoms, Denmark, Sweden, and Norway. It was only the other day that a thousand Norwegian students paid a visit to Upsala and Stockholm, and then went over to Copenhagen. They were received with open arms by the Danes. The shopkeepers would have no money for the articles they disposed of to them, begging them to take what they had asked for as a *souvenir* of Denmark. They lived in private houses, and partook of the best during their stay, entirely gratuitously; the King himself bore his share of the Leitourgia, lodging and boarding them in the palace. This Scandinavian party is gaining ground. It would be a great thing for Norway if the Bernadotte dynasty could succeed to the throne of the three kingdoms. They are of a much better stock than the descendants of Christian the First. Look at Oscar and his eldest son, the free-hearted, outspoken soldier; and then look at the throne of Denmark—a king who first marries a respectable princess and divorces her

for another, and does the same by her for no reason but because he has set eyes on a sempstress at a fire one night in the capital, and is determined to be possessed of her—and there she is, the Countess Danner. But he is blessed with no offspring, and when he dies the Danes get a Russian for their king, or what's next to it. No wonder, then, that the Scandinavian idea finds favour in Denmark. Even the king favours the idea; his toast, 'Denmark, Sweden, and Norway—three lands in peace, one in war,' shows that, selfish as he is, and careless of trampling on the feelings of those he has sworn to love and cherish, he has some little regard for the future of his people, and has not so far forgotten Waldemar and Knut, as to wish Denmark to be a mere appanage of Russia—in short, he has always aimed at being a popular monarch."

"A grand idea," said I, "no doubt, this of Scandinavian unity. I hear that Worsaae, and many of the Danish professors, have taken it up. But I don't think professors, generally, are practical men—at least, not in Germany, judging from what they did in Frankfort in 1848. They were with

child for many months, big with an ineffable conception, but they only brought forth wind after all."

"Ay! but we Norwegians don't manage in that way. Look at Eideswold, in 1814, and say whether we are not practical men."

"Don't you think Norway has anything to fear from the jealousy of Sweden?" I went on, changing the subject.

"No. There have been two or three times when we have been in a klem (hitch); but the good, sturdy common sense, and quiet resolution of us Norwegians has won the day. And now I think of it, this appointment of the Crown Prince to be viceroy at Christiania will be of inestimable benefit to the country. Our future ruler will get to understand the people, and know their worth. He will see what our freedom is doing for us. He makes himself quite at home with all, gentle and simple: dances with the parsons' wives and daughters, and smokes cigars with the merchants, but he is observing all the while very narrowly; and he sees we are all united in our attachment to our liberal institutions, and thriving under them wonderfully; while, at the same time, all are most loyal to the kingly house."

"But don't you think these religious schisms, Lammers on the one hand and the Roman Catholics on the other, will be causing a split in your national unity?"

"Oh! no. It is true the Roman Catholics have a great cathedral at Christiania; but they don't number more than a couple of hundred in all."

"Ah! but there are some more in the North. It was only the other day I heard that some Papists are engaged in an active propaganda about Tromsö."

"No doubt; the people up there have always been peculiarly inclined to be carried about by every wind of doctrine. It is there that the Haugianer made way; and it is there that these Papists have pitched their tents. They are going to work very systematically. They have purchased an estate at Alten. Every Sunday they preach to whoever will come. One of their addresses begins with the following attractive exordium:—'Beloved brethren, we have left father and mother, brothers and sisters, fatherland and friends, from affection

to you.' Again, they boldly talk of bringing into the country light for semi-darkness. The poor Laps much want some little book to be distributed gratis to explain to them the subtilty of these people. I wish you could make the case known to the excellent English Bible Society. And whereas the Haugians were always reputed to be cold and indifferent to the poor, these missionaries are very kind to them, visiting the sick, and offering food, clothing, and instruction gratis. The whole plan is most subtly contrived, especially when the fanatic character of the Laps, and their poverty is considered. If the Government does not take care, and see after their spiritual and temporal wants, they may fall, I grant, into the hands of those people. But I don't think the Norwegians will ever listen to them. There is an independence in our character that rebels against all priestly domination."

"So there is in England. But even there it is astonishing to see how far matters are going. Why! it is only the other day that a petition to our Queen, to restore the

'Greater Excommunication,' was put into my hands to sign."

But our conversation now turned from the vanities and vagaries of man to another topic.

The woods around are not deficient, I find, in capercailzie and black cock. Woodcocks, also, from the priest's description, must be here at times. It was a brown bird, he said, larger than a snipe, which at dusk flies backwards and forwards through an alley in the wood.

"That is the Linnæa borealis," said my host to me, pointing to a beautiful little white flower. "A strange thing happened to me," he said, "when I was at my mountain parsonage in the West. One Baron von Dübner, a Swedish botanist, drove up one day to my house. I found that he had journeyed all the way thither to make inquiries about a peculiar plant which grows, he said, just under the Iisbræ, on a particular spot of the Dovre Fjeld, and produces berries something like a strawberry, which ripen at the time when the snow melts in spring. I made particular

inquiries, and at last found a lad who said he knew what the stranger meant. He had seen and eaten these berries while tending cattle on that particular part of the Fjeld. I gave him a bottle, and he promised next spring to get me some; the baron promising to give a handsome reward. But alas! poor Erio did not survive to fulfil his promise. He was drowned that winter by falling through the ice. Now, do ask your botanists at Oxford about it."*

* I have not succeeded in obtaining any satisfactory information about this plant.

CHAPTER XV.

Papa's birthday—A Fellow's sigh—To Kongsberg—A word for waterproofs—Dram Elv—A relic of the shooting season—How precipitous roads are formed in Norway—The author does something eccentric—The river Lauven—Pathetic cruelty—The silver mine at Kongsberg—A short life and not a merry one—The silver mine on fire—A leaf out of Hannibal's book—A vein of pure silver—Commercial history of the Kongsberg silver mines—Kongsberg—The silver refining works—Silver showers—That horrid English.

On the morning of my departure, I find the Norsk flag hoisted on a tall flagstaff, on the eminence in front of the house.

"What is the meaning of this, Miss Lisa?"

"Oh! that's for papa's birthday," said she, in high glee.

"I wish you many happy returns of the day," was my greeting to the pastor, who was evidently not a little pleased at receiving the compliment in English.

Each of the ladies had something pretty to say to him on the occasion, and the Fruë produced a very

handsome new meerschaum pipe mounted with silver, which, by some magic process, she had obtained from the distant By against this auspicious morning.

As we are off the high road, there is no change-house near; but, by my host's assistance, I have procured the services of an excellent fellow, who agrees to take me with his own horse in my friend's carriole all the way to Kongsberg, twenty miles off, where I am to visit the silver mines, and return by the same conveyance to Hougesund, on my way to Drammen. How very kind these people are.

Seeing I took an interest in legends, the two elder sisters had routed out some tracts on the subject, and the little Arilda presented me with some Norwegian views, and a piece of ore from the neighbouring mine. Miss Lisa blushed and smiled, and did not know what to make of it, when I wickedly proposed that she should come with me to Oxford.

"No," said mamma, "if you were twenty years older, perhaps."

"And I hope, when next you visit us," said the priest, "you'll be married, and bring Mrs. M."

"Married! you know what I've told you about Fellowships. We are Protestant monks."

"Well," retorted his reverence, "I always say England is a great and enlightened country; but if you wish to see an *effete* custom clung to with desperate tenacity, go to England."

What torrents of rain poured down that day, as we journeyed along towards Kongsberg.

Poor Sigur was speedily soaked through, his wadmel coat mopping up the deluge like a sponge. But he took the thing quite as a matter of course. As for the horse, he went on quite swimmingly. Being encased in lengthy Cording's fishing boots, a sou'-wester on my head, and a long mackintosh on my shoulders, I was quite jubilant, and could not help defying the storm with certain exclamations, such as,

Blow winds, and crack your cheeks, &c.

Sigur, astonished at my spouting, asked for an explanation, and on getting it, looked anything but an assent to my proposition.

Truth be told, I was sorry for Sigur. But, at the same time, waterproofed as I was, I had a sort

of self-reliant and independent feeling, as the rain pattered off my caoutchouc habiliments, pretty much the same, I should think, as the water-fowl tribe must have, when they are having a jolly sousing, but keep perfectly dry withal.

"Well," said I, "Sigur," remembering it was September 1, "it will be fine weather for the millers, at all events. No Quernknurre to be feared this autumn." Sigur smiled curiously through the fringe of rain-drops that bugled his hat-rim. He was evidently astonished that the Englishman had found out that.

"That elv is called Dram Elv," said he, pointing to the river tearing along with its fleet of logs. "Once, that farm-house which you see yonder, a couple of hundred feet above the river, was close to the water's edge, but the water burst through some rocks below, and now it's a river instead of a lake. There is some old story about it," continued he, scratching his grizzled locks, "but I forget it now. They say that the river takes its name from that Gaard."

At Hougesund I remarked what I had never seen before out of the towns in Norway—an inti-

mation over the merchant's door that travellers would find accommodation there. This will give a very good notion of the amount of hotel competition in this country. I had a bag of shot, No. 5, and as all shooting was now over, Sigur received directions to sell the same to the merchant for what he could get. The merchant took it, loudly protesting the while that he should never be able to sell it again. "Our shooters," said he, "use the largest hagel, not such dust as this." I can imagine that people accustomed to shoot game sitting, would do so.

It was pitch dark long before we reached Kongsberg. There was nothing left for it but to let the horse take his own course; but as he was unacquainted with the road, this was pretty much that of a vessel without a compass.

As good luck would have it, we overtook a traveller in a carriole, or these lines would mayhap never have been written. "Ye gentlemen of England, who live at home at ease," are perhaps not aware, that in Norway, excepting on two or three pieces of newly-constructed road, there is no such a thing as posts and rails to fence the highway from danger. Now

and then, as in Switzerland, the edge of a sheer precipice is supposed to be guarded by blocks of granite, placed two or three yards apart, but ordinarily fences are only used to keep in cattle. It was not till the next day on returning that I became aware what I had escaped. It is true that there was no great depth to fall, but quite enough to break all my bones. But I might console myself with the thought, that I should have had an opportunity of talking to the doctor at Kongsberg, and obtaining from him some more information about his brownie patient, mentioned at page 232 above.

The object of my detour to Kongsberg was to have a sight of the celebrated silver mine in its neighbourhood. I had brought an introduction to the Director, Lammers (brother of the Dissenting Lammers of Skien), whom I found, next morning, deeply engaged in studying a plan of the workings. Provided by him with a note to the Superintendent, I put myself on my carriole, and started with Sigur for the mine. The excellent Larsen, at whose comfortable caravansary I put up, had indoctrinated Sigur that it was usual for strangers

to take a carriage from the inn; for which, of course, I should have had to pay pretty smartly. But I was determined to be eccentric for once, and did the most obvious thing—take my own vehicle and attendant. The Lauven, the best salmon river in the south of Norway, cuts the town in two with a stream of great width. The old wooden bridge, being worn out, is now being superseded by a new one, built exactly over it; so that we have the novel sight of two bridges one above the other. I could not learn that the good old Northern custom of burying a child under the new bridge, to make it durable, has been observed. At all events, the Kongsbergers, if they did so, kept their own counsel about it.

In Germany, too, this custom prevailed. Nay, within the last twenty years (see Grimm, "Deutsche Mythologie"), when a new bridge was built at Halle, the people said that a child ought to be built into it. Thiele, also, in his "Danmark's Folkesagn," relates as follows:—"A wall had to be built in Copenhagen, but as fast as they built it up, it sank into the swampy ground. In this dilemma, a small, inno-

cent child was set upon a stool with a table before it, on which were playthings and sweetmeats; and while it was amusing itself with these, twelve masons set to work and built a vault over it, and, at the same time, set up the wall again to the sound of music. Since that time the wall has never sunk the least."

Nothing noticeable caught my eye on the road, except a Thelemarken peasant-girl, in her quaint costume, dragging a little cow to market; but as on our return we again encountered both of them, it was clear that, with the dogged obstinacy of these people, rather than bate the price, she was marching back with the cow to her distant home in the mountains. A roundabout ascent of nearly four miles English brought us to the principal mine, which, as the crow flies, can be reached by a foot-path in half that distance. The device of a hammer and pick, set crosswise over a door, with the German motto, "Gluckauf," reminded me that these mines were first worked by miners from that country.

Presenting my credentials, I was ushered into a

room in the superintendent's house, and equipped with the toggery worn on those occasions—a dark green blouse, a leather apron fastened by a broad belt, and worn on the opposite side of the person to what aprons usually are; and lastly, an uncommonly stout black felt hat, with no brim—in shape, I should imagine, just like those worn by the Armenian priests. Such was the disguise which I assumed, and very suitable it was. The apron and blouse protected my clothes from dirt, and, if a piece of silver ore had attempted to fall upon my head, the hat would have acted as a helmet, and warded it off. My guide into "the bowels of the harmless earth" now approached, and we entered the level—commenced in 1716 by Frederick the Fifth—and progressed for nearly two miles along the tramway, lighted by a flaring torch, the ashes of which the conductor ever and anon knocked off into a vessel of water on the route. All was still, except that now and then a sound as of rushing waters jarred upon the ear. I found that it was the water pumped out of the mine by the engine, which usually glides quietly along in its wooden

channel; but in places where there was a slight ascent, got very angry, and shot along with increased velocity. At the end of this passage we came upon a group of miners, cooking their porridge for the mid-day meal. They are on duty, I understood, twenty-four hours at a stretch, so as to save the loss of time in getting to their work and back again, the distance in and out being so considerable. The men looked prematurely old, as far as I was able to judge from the very unfavourable light; and that, no doubt, has a great deal to do with looks at all times. The prettiest girl that ever joined in a Christmas revel, would be shocked if she could see a faithful representation of her face as it looked by the blue flickering light of the envious snapdragon.

But, to speak seriously, I find that though there is no explosive air in the mine, yet there is a closeness in the atmosphere which is prejudicial to health. At a comparatively early age the men become "ödelagt"—*i. e.*, worn out. After a certain number of years of service they are pensioned. Their wages are, for one class of men, 24 skillings to 30 skillings

per diem; for another, 30 skillings to 36 skillings; so that the lowest is about 10*d.*, and the highest rate about 1*s.* 3*d.*, English. In this mine, which is called the Kongengrube (King's Mine), two hundred are employed. Where we now stood was about the centre of the mine; above us was a perpendicular ascent to the top of the mountain, which we had avoided by entering the level. But we now had to descend, perpendicularly, a series of ladders, lighted by the dim light of a candle, which the guide, for fear of fire, had taken instead of the torch. We now descended fifty-five perpendicular ladders, of unequal lengths, but averaging, I understood, five fathoms each; so that, according to Cocker, the "tottle" we descended was 1650 feet, though, when we stood at the bottom of the perpendicular shaft, we were in reality 3120 feet from the upper mouth. Each ladder rests on a wooden stage, and the top of it against a sort of trap-door let into a similar stage above. This perpendicularity of the shaft is its chief danger. Should a large piece of rock become loosened above, there is nothing but these wooden stages to prevent it smashing through to

the bottom of the shaft; and as no notice, such as "Heads below—look out," is given, not a few dreadful accidents have taken place in consequence. Again, from the construction of the mine, it is peculiarly dangerous in case of fire.

It was only in May last that a fire broke out suddenly in the Gotteshülfe in der Not (God's help in time of need) Mine, where there are eighty-eight ladders. The fire raged with such fury that four unfortunate men were choked before they could escape. A fifth got out alive. The burning continued eight days. The bodies have only just been found, August 18th.

Fire, I find, is used to make new horizontal shafts. We went into one of these side shafts to see the operation. Arrived at the end of the gallery, which was as symmetrical as a railway tunnel, and very hot, our further progress was barred by a great iron door; this being opened, I saw a huge fire of fir poles blazing away at the far end of a kind of oven. After the fire has thus burned for several hours, it is suffered to go out; and the miners, approaching with their picks, can

with very little effort chip off several inches of the hard rock, which has become as brittle as biscuit from the action of heat. The biscuit being cleared away, a fresh fire is lit, and another batch baked and removed; and so on, day by day, till the miners come to ore.

At the bottom of the mine I was rewarded by the sight of a vein of pure silver. At first it seemed to me very like the rest of the rock, except that it was rougher to the touch; but with a little beating, like a dull schoolboy, it brightened up wonderfully, and I saw before me a vein of native silver, two or three inches in width, and descending apparently perpendicularly. The native silver thus found, together with the argentiferous rock, is packed up in a covered cart, under lock and key, and driven into Kongsberg, where the smelting works are situate.

"How does the refined silver go to Christiania?" I inquired.

"In a country cart," was the reply, "driven by a simple bonder." Even Queen Victoria's baby-plate might pass in this manner through the country without danger of spoliation."

No specimens are permitted to be sold in the mine; the men, I understand, are searched each time that they leave work.

The fortunes of these celebrated silver mines, which were discovered in 1623, have been like the mines themselves. There have been many ups and downs in them. At one time they have been worked by the State; at another, they have been in private hands; and sometimes the exploration stopped altogether. After thus lying idle for some years, the works were, in 1814, if I am rightly informed, offered for sale by the Danish Government to our present consul-general at Christiania, and the purchase was only not completed in consequence of that gentleman declining to keep up the full amount of workmen, a condition which the Government insisted on. Be this as it may, they were set a-going by the Government in 1816, and the Storthing voted 21,000 dollars for the purpose, and even greater sums in subsequent years. And yet, in 1830, the mine was not a paying concern. Just about this time, however, the miners hit upon a rich vein, and ever since 1832 it has paid. The greatest yield

was in 1833, when about 47,000 marks of pure silver were obtained. At present, about 400 marks are obtained weekly, or about 21,000 per annum. There is an actual profit of nearly 200,000 dollars a year. Notwithstanding this brilliant state of affairs, there has, reckoning from first to last, been a loss of several millions of dollars on the venture.

At one time Kongsberg was a city of considerable importance. At present, there are less than 5000 inhabitants; but in 1769, when Christiania had only 7496 inhabitants, Trondjem 7478, and Bergen 13,735, Kongsberg had over 8000. But it must be always considered important, as being the great mining school of the country—a country which contains, no doubt, vast mineral treasures under its surface.

Tough work it was ascending the ladders, and very hot withal. But as I intended to be in Drammen that evening, distant five-and-twenty miles, no time was to be lost. My climbing on the fjeld had been capital practice; and such was the pace at which I ascended, that the superintendent, who joined us, broke down or bolted midway.

We were soon at Kongsberg, it being down hill all the way. People told me I must by no means omit going to see a monument on the hill, between the mines and the town, where the names of ten kings, who had come to see the mine, were recorded, including Bernadotte. But I preferred devoting the rest of my spare time to what I considered much more instructive, viz., a visit to the establishments for reducing and refining the silver ore. As good luck would have it, I had an opportunity of witnessing the process for refining silver. About 2000*l.* worth of the precious metal was in an oven, with a moveable bottom, undergoing the process of refinement by the intense heat of a pine-wood fire, blown upon it from above.

Schiller's magnificent "Song of the Bell" rose to my mind—

> Nehmet Holz von Fichtenstamme,
> Doch recht trocken lasst es seyn,
> Dass die eingepresste Flamme
> Schlage zu dem Schwalch hinein!

The mynte-mester, a fat man, of grave aspect, illuminated by large spectacles, ordered one of

the Cyclopses around to put what looked like a thin, long poker, with a small knob at the end, into the boiling mass. It came out coated with a smooth envelope of dead metal. This the director examined, and shook his head; so away went the blow-pipe as before. Presently the same process was repeated. On the poker-knob being inserted a third time, the director scrutinized it carefully, and then said, "færdig!" On examining it, I found projecting, like a crown of airy thorns, a coating of exceedingly fine spicula of frosted silver. That was the signal that it was sufficiently purified.. Never till now had I known so exactly the force of the words of the Psalmist, "Even as silver which from the earth is tried and purified seven times in the fire."

It was desired to have the silver in small nodules for silversmiths, as more easily workable than in a lump. For this purpose, a vessel of cold water was placed under the furnace-spout. Another Cyclops stationed himself in front of the said spout, holding in his hand the nozzle of some hose connected with a water-engine. With this he took aim at the orifice (reminding me much of

a Norskman shooting game sitting, but in this case it was flying, as will be seen). A signal is given, a cock turned, and out rushes the white-hot molten metal; but at the moment of its escape from the trap, the fireman discharges a jet of cold water at it; the consequence is, that, instead of descending in a continuous stream, the blazing jet is squandered, and falls into the vessel below in a shower of silver drops. Danaë could have explained the thing to a nicety, only her shower was one of gold; while the metal most predominant in her own composition would seem to have been brass.

The gentleman who had been conversing with me in German, and apparently considered me a Teuton, said he could talk French also; but as for that horrid English, those people began a sentence and rolled it in their mouths, spit it half out, and the rest they swallowed. I strongly recommend any Englishman, who wishes to hear what people on the Continent think of John Bull and his wife, not to betray his nation if he can help it, and then he has some chance of getting at the true state of opinion without flattery. This rule will apply to

general society, such as one meets abroad. But there is a no less golden exception, which is this: never at a custom-house or police-office know the language of the officials; if you do, they are sure to badger you, especially if you are above suspicion. If, on the other hand, you shrug your shoulders, and keep replying to their remarks in English, you will completely foil their efforts at annoyance, and they will not be able to make anything of you, and look out for other prey.

Another remarkably polite and intelligent official now proceeded to show me some beautiful specimens of pure silver in another part of the building. Some of these "Handstene," as they are called, I purchased. Here, too, were those splendid specimens that appeared at the Great Exhibition in London, and also in Paris; and gained a medal in both instances. The bronze medal, designed by Wyon, with the busts of Victoria and Albert, and likewise the silver one of Napoleon, were side by side; the latter pretty, doubtless, but, to my thinking, and also that of the inspector, vastly inferior to the former, which, he said, was a real work of art.

My companions at dinner were the engineer of the new road out of Kongsberg, and a Hungarian refugee, getting his living by portrait-painting. All things considered, I should think that the engineer's trade was the better of the two. But the artist was a good-looking fellow, and twirled his moustache with great complacency; so that, perhaps, he got sitters. At all events, he could have no competition.

CHAPTER XVI.

A grumble about roads—Mr. Dahl's caravansary—"You've waked me too early"—St. Halvard—Professor Munck—Book-keeping by copper kettles—Norwegian society—Fresh milk—Talk about the great ship—Horten the chief naval station of Norway—The Russian Admiral G—— Conchology—Tönsberg the most ancient town in Norway—Historical reminiscences—A search for local literature—An old Norsk patriot—Nobility at a discount—Passport passages—Salmonia—A tale for talkers—Agreeable meeting—The Roman Catholics in Finmark—A deep design—Ship wrecked against a light-house—The courtier check-mated.

THE new road, which avoids some fearful hills, will soon be finished; and that is the excuse for not repairing the old one, which was something like what Holborn Hill would be with all the paving-stones up.

Prince Napoleon, who has just returned from his voyage to Spitzbergen and the Arctic regions, is about to visit Kongsberg in company with one

of the Royal Princes of Sweden, to-morrow. It is lucky for the highway surveyors that it is not the King of Oude. They doubtless would have been put into the ruts to fill them up, or smelted in the smelting-houses, or have had to undergo some other *refined* process.

Sigur and I parted company at Hougesund; he proceeding homewards, and I crawling along to Drammen, by the side of the elv, with the worst horse I ever drove in Norway. Fortunately, the road is a dead level, and good. The river abounds in salmon, which cannot get up higher than Hougesund.

On the other side of it, I saw several lights, which I learned were at saw-mills, which are working night and day. I suppose they are taking time by the forelock. Hitherto, saw-mills have been in the hands of a few privileged persons; but in 1860 the monopoly expires, and anybody may erect one.

I had been strongly recommended to one Mr. Dahl. His caravansary I found both comfortable and reasonable. The St. Halvard steam-boat,

which was to convey me next morning to some station in the Christiania Fjord, started at seven o'clock, I found, so I requested to be called at a little before six. The damsel walked into my bedroom, without any preliminary knock, long before that hour,

"You've come too early," said I; "the boat does not start till seven."

"Oh, yes; but the passengers are accustomed to assemble on board half an hour before."

So much for the Norwegian value of time.

At five minutes to seven I found myself on board the boat, much to the astonishment, no doubt, of the numerous passengers; who, with the patient tranquillity of Norwegians, had long ago settled in their places.

"St. Halvard—who was St. Halvard?" said I to a person near me, as we scudded along through the blue waves, glistening in the morning sun, and curled by a gentle breeze. He did not know, but he thought a friend of his on board knew. The friend, an intelligent young lieutenant in the army, from Fredrickshall, soon produced a book of Professor

Munck's, but the volume made no mention of the enigmatical personage. Seeing, however, that I looked over the pages with interest, nothing would content the young *militaire* but that I should retain possession of it; which I accordingly did, with many thanks. It may be as well to mention, that there are two Muncks in Norway; A. Munck, the poet, and Professor A. P. Munck, the historian, a person of European reputation, who is now engaged on a comprehensive work, "Norske Folks Historie," "History of the Norsk People." He is also author of several other works of antiquarian research.

"You have been in Thelemarken?" inquired the lieutenant. "That's the county for old Norsk customs and language. With all their dirt and rude appearance, some of the bonders are very rich, and proud of their wealth. I remember being at a farm some miles above Kongsberg, where I saw a number copper kettles ranged on a shelf, as bright as bright could be; I found that these were the gauge of the bonder's wealth. For every thousand dollars saved a new copper kettle was added. You

have no idea how tenacious these people are of their social position. When the son and daughter of two bonders are about to be married, a wonderful deal of diplomacy is used, the one endeavouring to outwit the other. It is surprising with all the chaffering and bargaining between the elders that the marriages turn out so well as they do.

"And yet even the wealthiest of them live in the meanest manner. I don't suppose you would get any fresh milk in your travels in Thelemarken, except at the saeters. You would not believe it, but they are in the habit of keeping their milk from spring to autumn. To prevent it becoming stale or maggoty, they stir it every day. In process of time it assumes a very strong scent, which the people inhale with great gusto. It is a filthy affair: but people accustomed to it like it, I am told, above all things. A curious case in point occurs to my mind: A Voged, who had been for some years stationed up in a wild part of Thelemarken, was translated to Drammen, which is an agreeable place, and by no means

deficient in good society. But, with all this improvement in neighbourhood, and the appliances of life; in spite of his increased pay and higher position, the Voged sickened and pined; in short, became a regular invalid. What could it be? He missed the thick, stinking milk of the Thelemarken wilds. He petitioned to return to the old Fogderie, where he would have less pay, but more milk; and, from the last accounts, he is fully restored to health, and enjoying himself amazingly."

As we approached Horten, the chief naval station of Norway, I saw a new church, apparently built in red stone, and in the Gothic style; which, as far as I could judge, reflected no little credit on the architect. At this moment, a Norskman tapped me on the shoulder, and asked—

"Are you an Englishman? Do you live in London? Have you seen the great ship that is building on the banks of the Thames? They say it is twice as long as the magazine at Horten yonder; but I can't believe it."

"You mean the *Great Eastern*, as they call it?

I don't know how long the magazine is; but the ship is 680 feet long."

"Virkelig! det er accurat dobbelt" (Really! then it is exactly double, just as I heard.)

The daily steamer from Christiania to Fredrickshall met us here, *Halden*, by name; and separated me from the intelligent lieutenant, with whom I exchanged cards.

As we steamed out of Horten, past the gun-boats and arsenals, a naval-looking man said—

"We have had a great man here lately, sir: the Russian Admiral G——. The newspapers were strongly against his being allowed to pry about our naval station; but he was permitted by the Government. After examining everything very accurately, he said, 'It's all very good, too good: for England will come and take it away from you.'"

"And what did the dockyard people think of that? Did they agree with him?"

"Heaven forefend! They knew whom they had to deal with. As he walked through the arsenal, he saw some shells lying about. 'What is that?

some new invention?' 'Oh! no,' said the officer; 'it is only shells, after the old fashion.' The Russian admiral seemed contented with the reply; but he was not going to be put off the real scent by a feint of this kind. In fact, a Norwegian captain, not long ago, did invent a peculiar kind of shell, which, with unerring precision, can be so managed as to burst in a vessel's side after effecting an entrance. The Russian knew this, but kept his counsel then. Subsequently, he found an opportunity of drawing a subaltern officer aside, to whom he offered two hundred dollars to reveal the secret. But the Norskman would not divulge the secret (shell out), only telling his superior, who took no notice, but merely chuckled at the Russian's duplicity."

"It is an old Russian trick, that," replied I; "if I remember rightly, the Muscovites obtained the secret of the Congreve rocket by some such underhand manœuvre."

The admiral's curiosity will remind the reader of the facetious *Punch's* "Constantine Paul Pry," who visited England and France for a similar object.

As we steered down the vast Fjord, which is here of great width, and ramifies into various arms, we see the *Nornen*, a new Norsk frigate, in the offing, on her trial trip.

A little after noon, we were steaming down a shallow bay, surrounded by low wooded islets, to Tonsberg, the most ancient town in Norway. The harbour for shipping is in the Tonsberg Fjord, distant a bowshot from where we land; but to get there by water would require a detour of several miles. The isthmus is low and flat, and presents no engineering difficulties whatever. In any other country, a ship canal would long since have joined the two waters. At present, there is only a ditch between.

The ruins of the old fortified castle are still discernible on the elevation to the north of the town; and a sort of wooden building, something between a summer-house and an observatory, has lately been erected on the spot. The old castle (Tonsberg-hus) suffered a good deal from an attack of the Swedes in 1503; and was totally destroyed in 1532, in the disturbances that ensued on the

return of King Christian II. to Norway. As early as the close of the ninth century, the city was a place of resort for merchants, and the residence of the kings in the middle ages. At one time there were half a score of churches in the place; but of these none remained fifty years ago, except one very ancient one, in the Pointed style; but this was pulled down by some Vandal authorities of the place. During the troubles of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries the town was taken and plundered more than once; but it received its finishing blow from the Union of Calmar.

An eminence to the east of the town is called the Mollehaug, where in the middle ages the renowned Hougathing, or Parliament, was held, and the kings received homage. There being nothing left in the town to indicate its former importance, I mounted up the Castle-hill, and took a look of the surrounding country and Fjords, with the blue mountains of Thelemarken far in the distance. The ancient seat of the Counts of Jarlsberg is near at hand; from which family the surrounding district bears the name of Grefskabet (county).

Afterwards I strolled into the cemetery. Some of the tombs were of polished red granite, which is obtained in the neighbourhood; most of them had long inscriptions. Under two relievo busts in white marble was the short motto, "Vi sees igien," (we shall meet again,) and then a couple of joined hands, and the names of So-and-so and his Hustru (gudewife). On an obelisk of iron I read—"Underneath rests the dust of the upright and active burgher, the tender and true man and father, merchant Hans Falkenborg. His fellow-burghers' esteem, his survivors' tears, testify to his worth. But the Lord gave, the Lord took. Blessed be the name of the Lord." On another stone was written—"Underneath reposes the dust of the in-life-and-death-united friends, Skipper F. and Merchant B. Both were called from the circle of their dear friends December 10, 1850, at the age of 28. Short was their pilgrimage here on earth; but who hath known the mind of the Lord, who hath been his councillor? Peace be with their dust." Altogether there was much good taste exemplified in these memorials of the dead.

As I returned towards the inn, I called at the only bookseller's in this town of nearly three thousand inhabitants, in hopes of obtaining some local literature in reference to a place of such historical celebrity; Madame Nielsen, however, only sold school-books of the paltriest description. After my walk, I was by no means sorry to sit down to a good dinner at the inn. Opposite me sat a fine old fellow, with grey streaming locks, while two bagmen and the host completed the company. Under the influence of some tolerable Bordeaux, the old gentleman became quite communicative; he had been in arms in '14, when Norway was separated from Denmark, and the Norskmen recalcitrated against the cool handing them over from one Power to another.

"That was a perilous time for us; one false step, and we might have been undone; but each man had only one thought, and that was for his country. In this strait," continued he, his eyes sparkling, "one hundred Norskmen met at Eidsvold on May 1, and on May 17 the constitution was drawn up which we now enjoy. Please God it may last. The Norwegians may well be proud

of it, and no wonder that the Swedes are jealous of us with their four estates, and their miserable pretence of a constitution—the worst in Europe. Their shoals of nobility are the drag-chain; we got rid of them here in 1821. That was a great blessing; Carl Johann was against it, and three thousand Swedish soldiers were in the vicinity of Christiania. Count Jarlsberg, our chief noble, was for the abolition; its chief opponent was Falsing. He said in the Storthing, that if our nobility were abolished he would say farewell to Norway. Another member took him up short, and said, 'And the Norsk hills would echo well.'"

Dinner over, I drove through the woods back to Vallö, where I was to meet the steamer. Two Swiss gentlemen possess a large establishment here for the manufacture of salt by the evaporation of salt water; a cotton mill is also adjoining, belonging to the same proprietors.

On applying for my ticket at the office—where it may be had a trifle cheaper than on board—my passport is demanded and examined, and the office-keeper informs me that it is against the rules to give a ticket for an outward-bound steamer to any

one whose passport has not been countersigned by the Norwegian authorities. Now, on leaving Norway by way of Christiania, as I was aware, it is required to be shown to the police, and *viséd*, but as I had never been near the capital this year, and, from the moment I had landed to this, the passport had never been demanded, it did not occur to me that a *visé* would be required. For the moment I was disconcerted, as nobody was to be found at Vallö who could remedy the defect.

On inquiry, however, I found that the naval officer in command of the coming vessel was my old friend Captain H., and so I felt secure. There were plenty of faces that I knew on board, among the rest some Oxford Undergraduates returning from a delightful excursion up the country; there were also some "Old Norwegians," who had been fishing in the north, and complained loudly of the unfavourableness of the season. There had been an unusual amount of rain and cold, and the rivers had been so full of snow-water, that the salmon had stuck at the mouths, a prey to nets, &c., in preference to braving the chills of the Elv.

Among other small talk, I began to recount as I

sat in the Captain's room, how I had seen the old gentleman with the star and diplomatic coat. (See *anté*). Just then somebody came and called out the first lieutenant by name, which was, I perceived, the very same as that of the last baron whom I was engaged in taking off.

"Is he any relation?" I inquired in alarm.

"Only his son," was the reply.

Fortunately I had not said anything derogatory to the papa, or I might have placed myself in an awkward fix. This is only another proof how cautious you ought to be on board one of these steamers of talking about whom you have seen, and what you think, for the coast being the great high road, everybody of condition takes that route —you may have been, perhaps, for instance, abusing some merchant for overcharges — and after speaking your mind, *pro* or *con*, the gentleman with whom you are conversing may surprise you with a—

"Ja so! Indeed! That's my own brother."

"Were you ever up beyond the North Cape?" said a Frenchman to me, at dinner.

"Oh! yes; I once went to Vadsö."

"And what sort of beings are they up there? Half civilized, I suppose?"

"Not only half, but altogether, I assure you," said I. "I met with as much intelligence, and more real courtesy and kindness, than you will encounter half the world over." At this moment my neighbour to the left, a punchy, good-humoured-looking little fellow, with a very large beard and moustache, which covered most of his face, and who had evidently overheard the conversation, said, in English:

"You not remember me? You blow out your eyes with gunpowder upon the banks of the Neiden. What a malheur it was! Lucky you did not be blind. I am Mr. ——, the doctor at Vadsö. We went, you know, on a pic-nic up the Varanger Fjord. Count R——, the bear-shooter, who was such a tippler, was one of the party."

"Opvarter (waiter), bring me a bottle of port, first quality, strax (directly)," said I, remembering the little gentleman perfectly well, and how kindly he and his companions had on that occasion drunk skall to the Englishman, and

made me partake of the flowing bowl. We had a long chat, and presently he introduced me to his wife; who, I found, was, like himself, a Dane. They were journeying to their native country, after several years' absence.

"What are those Roman Catholics doing up in Finmark?" said I.

"The people hardly know yet what to make of them," he replied. "The supposition generally is, no doubt, that they wish to convert the Fins. But I don't think so. They are aiming at higher game."

"How so?"

"Russia!—That's their object. They can't get into that country itself. But a vast quantity of Russians are continually passing and repassing between the nearest part of Russia and Finmark. And they will try to indoctrinate them. Their *point d'appui* is most dexterously selected. There is no lack of funds, I assure you. They have settled on an estate at Alten, which they have bought."

"And so clever and agreeable they are," put in

the Dane's lady. "Mr. Bernard especially. He has a wonderfully winning manner about him."

"The chief of the mission," continued the doctor, "is M. Etienne, a Russian by birth, whose real name is Djunkovsky, and who has become a convert from the Greek faith. He is styled M. le Préfet Apostolique des Missions Polaires du Nord, de l'Amerique, &c.; and proposes, he says, to operate hereafter on parts of North America. On St. Olaf's day, he invited forty of the most respectable people in the neighbourhood to a banquet, and, in a speech which he made, said that the Norsk religion had much similarity with the Roman Catholic; and that Saint Olaf was the greatest of Norsk kings. Still, I think they have higher game in view than Norway."

A master-stroke of policy, thought I. The Propaganda will have surpassed itself if it should succeed in setting these people thinking. The children of the autocrat will cast off their leading-strings yet; and the strife between the Latin and Greek Church rage, not between the monks at the Holy City, but in the heart of holy Russia.

At this pause in the conversation, the Frenchman, who did not seem a whit disconcerted at his former *faux pas*, recommenced his criticisms. The fare, and the doings on board generally, evidently did not jump with his humour. "What is this composition?" he inquired of the steward. "Miös-Ost?" (a sort of goat's-milk cheese, the size and shape of a brick, and the colour of hare-soup). "It's very sweet," observed the Frenchman, sarcastically; "is there any sugar in it?"

"No!" thundered the captain, who did not seem to relish these strictures. "No. It's made of good Norsk milk, and that is so sweet that no sugar is required."

This remark had the effect of making the Gaul look small, and he gulped down any further satire that he might have had on his tongue.

I heard, by-the-bye, an amusing anecdote of these cheeses. They are considered a delicacy in Norway; and a merchant of Christiania sent one as a present to a friend in England. The British custom-house authorities took it for a lump of diachylon, and charged it accordingly, as drugs, a great deal more than it was worth.

As we sail through the Great Belt, the mast-tops of a wrecked vessel appear sticking out of the water near the lighthouse of Lessö. It has been a case of collision, that dreadful species of accident that threatens to be more fatal to modern navies than storms and tempests. In this case, the schooner seemed determined to run against something, so she actually ran against the lighthouse, in a still night, and when the light was plain to see. The concussion was so great, that the vessel sank a few yards off, with some of her crew. The lighthouse rock is in *statu quo*.

Run your head against a wall,
It will neither break nor fall.

On board was Mr. D——, a chamberlain at the Court of Stockholm. This gay gentleman professed to be terribly smitten by the charms of a Danish lady, and wished very much to know whether she was married. I heard that she was, but she apparently desired to relieve the monotony of the voyage by a little flirtation, and kept her secret. On awaking from a nap on one

of the sofas, a friend informed me that the chamberlain, whom I saw sketching a dozing passenger, had done the like by me. I quietly got out my sketch-book, and took him off as quickly as possible. Happening to look my way, he saw what was going on, and sprang up, as if shot. "Those who live in glass houses," &c. I begged him to look at the caricature I had made;—eyes staring out of head, hair brushed up, &c. This counterfeit presentment seemed to strike him all of a heap; he shut up his sketch-book, and walked out of the cabin; while a Swedish Countess, very young and pretty, who had been smoking a very strong cigar on deck, and had to abide the consequences of her rashness, came downstairs, and took refuge in the ladies' apartment.

END OF VOL. I.

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00032926

Digitized with financial assistance from the
Government of Maharashtra
on 15 March, 2016